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VISIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN ENGLISH EDUCATION

BY

THEODORE L. RELLER

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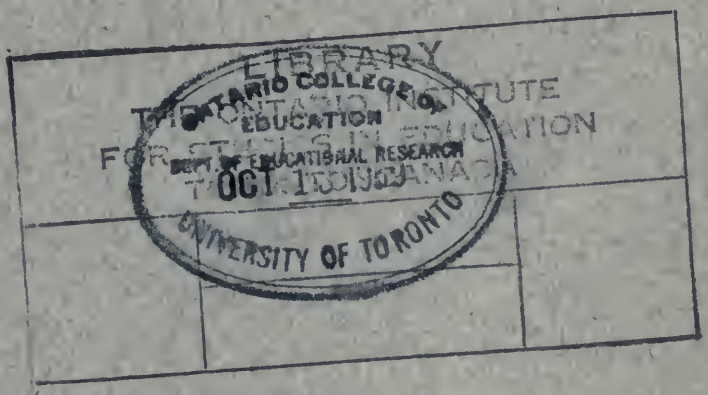

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FOREWORD

Effective administration of public school systems is no simple matter even when the unit is small. When the unit is large, administrative problems multiply and become much more complicated. The potential advantages in large units must be realized. At the same time parental and citizen initiative in the educational effort at the local level must be encouraged and directed. With the steadily mounting concentration of population in metropolitan areas, it is urgent that these problems, as well as others, be studied carefully with a view to their solution.

In this research report attention is given to one attempt to achieve simultaneously the benefits of large organization and of participation in decision-making by persons in the area served. The large administrative unit is examined briefly, and the difficulties peculiar to it are noted. Essential backgrounds are described, together with the compromise solution adopted in 1944 by the English Parliament for the more populous counties. Results of ten years of operation under this compromise are summarized and evaluated, and implications of the experience in this one type of school district organization are analyzed to discover possible implications for other metropolitan areas.

This study should be of value in stimulating thought about the problem of school district administration in all growing population centers. Important suggestions are made for the organization of educational service in a manner that will facilitate efficiency and wide dissemination of control among citizens.

WILLIAM A. BROWNELL
Dean of the School of Education

University of California, Berkeley

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To delegate is to entrust to another the execution of some power or duty vested in oneself; as such, delegation implies in its very essence the transfer to another of more than a mere executory power; a discretion also is transferred.

J. F. Garner

I am urging that need exists to make local government areas bigger and smaller at the same time. . . . we must find ways of linking large and small units harmoniously together, so as neither to forego the advantages of large scale organization, where they can be shown to exist, nor to depart from the presupposition that the scale of government ought always to be as small as can be made compatible with reasonably efficient service.

G. D. H. Cole

DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN ENGLISH EDUCATION

BY

THEODORE L. RELLER

I. THE TOO LARGE LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

In the United States, education has generally been regarded as a responsibility of the states. This resulted from the fact that the federal government was established by the states and was delegated only certain powers by them, among which the provision for education was not included.

Although the control of education is thus legally a function of the states, few have exercised their power directly at the elementary and secondary school levels. In practice, most of the responsibility for elementary and secondary education has devolved upon local school districts. These districts, of course, exist as a result of state action and hence can be viewed as one of the means by which the state has exercised its power, but it must be recognized that local districts have become more than agents of the state. Once established, they develop a life of their own and fight for the right to remain free of state control. They have taken much initiative in the development of education, and many outstanding advances in American education are attributable to the quality and vigor of local school districts.

The nature of the local school administrative units has changed as social and economic conditions have changed. The towns of New England, initially school districts, divided and formed a number of small school districts. In many states the townships broke into several school districts. Later, as transportation improved and the establishment of high schools made it desirable to bring larger numbers of students together, the tendency to make local school districts smaller gradually ceased. Then began the effort by the states to establish districts large enough to provide adequate education at a reasonable cost. These movements from large to small districts and then back to larger ones were related to a changing conception of an adequate educational program.

The struggle to attain larger local administrative units[1] has been long and tedious. Many unnecessarily small local districts continued

[1] Attention is centered upon administrative units (areas with a board of education, single administrative organization, and, in general, power to levy taxes) rather than upon attendance units (the area served by one school). In earlier years and even today in small towns and rural areas these may be coterminous.

to exist long after they had become indefensible. The power of vested interests and the fear that control of the schools would be taken from the people prolonged their existence. However, in the last decade, the number of administrative units in the United States has fallen from approximately 100,000 to about 55,000. To stimulate this drive toward larger units many studies were conducted to determine the characteristics of adequate local administrative units and the essential procedures in establishing them.

The Urban Situation

Although effort was made to form local units of adequate size in terms of area, numbers of children, material, and leadership resources, little attention was given to the size of the district in the urban centers. It should be noted that elimination of the excessively small, highly ineffective units is not complete in many states. However, perhaps it has gone far enough—or at least has sufficient momentum that we should now look at what has happened at the other end of the continuum.

Little has been said about districts becoming too large. This is quite understandable when the total district problem is considered. However, it is important to note that today the great majority of people live in urban areas, and a substantial number live in large urban areas. In 1890, 29 per cent of the population lived in urban communities. By 1950 this had increased to 64 per cent. In 1950 more than 71,000,000 persons lived in 77 metropolitan areas of at least 250,000 inhabitants each, and millions more in smaller metropolitan areas. Many lived within the cities. The city boundary lines, however, although understandable historically, bear little relation to the facts and needs of the present day. Consequently, millions are left on the fringes, residents of the cities in all but legal aspects. This growth of urban population resulted in more rapid elimination of small school districts in the cities than in rural areas.

The process of achieving larger units in the urban areas has been going on for a century, generally without instigation by the state. As the cities increased in size geographically in the nineteenth century and in the early part of the twentieth, new areas were added to the city school district. In the early years when boards of education in many cities were large, the size of the board was increased when new territory was added so that it too could be represented. Later the large board representing the areas was discontinued, and a small board representing the city as a whole was created. When large boards were discontinued an attempt was frequently made to keep local interest alive by having

local advisory boards in each area which formerly had members on the main board of education. Since responsibility and power were in the hands of the central board, however, these area school committees did not remain active very long. In fact, since some of them gave attention largely to details of administration and even to patronage, many educators viewed their disappearance as a step toward a more effective system professionally administered from a central office responsible to a central board of education.

Thus there developed in the United States a system characterized by extremes: extreme centralization with large districts in many large urban areas, and very small administrative units with little or no centralization in rural areas. Thousands of citizens continued to participate in the educational effort by serving as trustees in the small towns and in the country, but in the cities only a handful were active.

In recent decades, as population concentration has continued, there has been less tendency for the "fringe" areas (the newly developed areas on the city boundary) to become part of the city. Fringe communities have tended to remain separate and to develop their own local services, including education, independently of the city of which they are physically and economically a part. Many reasons are offered for this reluctance to merge with the city. Among these are the desire to keep control at home, the tax advantages on one side or the other, the reputation of cities for political corruption, the better services which it is believed may be developed independently, community pride, avoidance of city ordinances, and the legal difficulties of merging.

Whatever the reasons, we have a serious organization problem in the fringe areas and in the cities which they surround. Basically the problem results from our failure to have developed an adequate local government structure for our huge concentrations of population. We have perhaps too easily assumed that no district is too large in population; yet we have stopped adding to the area of many of our cities. We have not made serious efforts to find a solution to the problems of district organization in our large conurbations, if indeed we have recognized that a problem exists.

It is becoming increasingly clear that it is necessary to have a local district of a certain size, with certain minimum numbers of children and certain minimum resources in wealth and professional personnel, if adequate educational services are to be provided. Only then can effective lay participation be developed, equalization increased, an adequate return for invested resources be secured, adequate opportunities provided, and resources be committed to essential research and experi-

mentation. Nevertheless, the question must be asked: What are the results of the too large organization and what can be done organizationally to attack effectively the problem of excessive size?

In an attempt to meet by deconcentration or decentralization the problems resulting from the great concentration of population, these steps are possible:

1. The great concentrations themselves could be disbanded and the populations could be dispersed. Decentralization of educational control would then follow readily. This, however, is extremely improbable in modern societies. Even if new towns of limited population should be developed, as in England, they would probably not be sufficient in numbers to affect materially the great concentrations.

2. A city or urban area could be divided into a number of independent school districts. The governmental structure necessary to support such districts, however, has ceased to exist in most of our cities. An exception in local government, of course, is New York City with its boroughs. The Bronx Park development there suggests the possibility of education action by sections of the city. Reconstitution of local government or local educational units as independent authorities within cities, however, seems very unlikely. Economically and in nongovernmental organization the city tends to be a unit. To divide it would be extremely difficult and of questionable desirability. Furthermore, it must be recognized that some educational needs can best be met by the very large unit—the city or even the metropolitan area.

3. Through internal administrative organization the city can be divided with an assistant or associate superintendent resident in and responsible for each area. This system has been used in Philadelphia, for example, with some measure of success. In recent years Chicago has adopted a plan of this type with satisfying results. Under this program there is usually no official body of citizens with whom the area administrator works. He is largely the agent of the central board and office rather than of the area. But despite its limitations, this plan of deconcentration has desirable features and needs to be studied and possibly developed further.

4. Greater responsibilities can be placed upon the school principals who may seek the coöperation of the laymen of the area. Some reasonably successful steps in this direction have been taken in recent years. However, failure to give the lay groups sufficient power limits the usefulness of the plan. In addition, the geographical area and the human and material resources of the school attendance area are too limited for this to become a strong local unit. Furthermore, because the prin-

cipal is generally responsible only for a segment, elementary or secondary, of the educational program, he cannot assume leadership for all phases of education in a geographical area, but in any program of decentralization, he should be recognized as having an important role.

5. Advisory groups or committees can be developed for the city school district, and thus communication between the educational system and the people be improved. These groups, however, are legally without power and actual decision-making largely remains where it is now. To what extent competent people can be expected to devote time and energy to serving in an advisory capacity is an open question. Is some measure of responsibility not essential if men are to be challenged by the opportunity for local educational service? The desirability of advisory groups is not questioned here. That they can satisfy the need for local participation and local responsibility in large population concentrations is, however, extremely doubtful. As employed, they generally serve the total area and thus do not encourage solutions of issues by local areas.

6. Local divisional units can be created by the large units and extensive responsibilities can be given to them. These divisional units[2] can have their own lay boards and superintendents. This conscious plan of decentralization or devolution is rather new to our thinking. In fact, the problems of decentralization have been given relatively little attention by educators in the United States. Our rural areas with their many districts do not actually constitute decentralization, for centralization has never been known in them. They represent local action. Now, however, in our large school districts, we should be giving serious attention to plans for decentralization—plans which will not nullify the improvements made possible by the large units with their tremendous resources, but which will recapture some of the qualities often sacrificed in the large organization.

II. HARASSMENTS OF LARGE-SCALE ORGANIZATIONS

In considering the problems associated with large-scale organization, certain notations should be made. It is important to recognize that these problems are not attributable solely to large size. Most, if not all, exist in some degree in any organization. However, it seems certain that they are accentuated by the size of the organization, and that as size increases they may even take on such a different form as to seem different in

[2] Divisional administration units are subdivisions of local education authorities, created in accord with the Education Act of 1944, to which certain powers are delegated.

kind. These problems are not an argument for extremely small organizations. They too have their peculiar difficulties which should be examined in considerable detail.

Although no attempt is here made to examine the strengths of large-scale organization, it must be recognized that they exist. The manner in which large-scale organizations develop in a wide variety of fields indicates something of the qualities which they possess. The large organization has resources, specialization, facility for research and self-examination, efficiency, and economic advantage and power which are exceedingly attractive and advantageous. This should be kept in mind as other problems are weighed. It suggests that the problem before us is not whether we should or should not have large-scale organizations. We need them and will have increasing numbers of them. *The question is whether we can have large-scale organizations while avoiding or reducing the severity of most of the problems which tend to follow in their wake.* In order to pursue this question it is necessary that the problems be identified in specific terms.

Problems of adaptation.—The tendency of social institutions to formalize has long been admitted. Although society itself may change rapidly, its institutions frequently lag far behind in making the necessary adaptations. The large organization by its very size tends to be isolated from the society in which it exists. It finds a certain security in itself and an ability to persist even while failing to meet societal needs. Control of it is further removed from the specific need than in smaller organizations and therefore is exercised with less regard to the need.

It is true that some large organizations aware of these dangers have succeeded in overcoming them to a remarkable degree. The study of Westby,[3] however, documents the tendency. He found far fewer adaptations in a large-scale educational organization than in a group of small organizations. This may explain in part the fact that today educators are much less disposed to look to our large cities for innovations in education than they were three quarters of a century ago. At that time the cities were not as well organized and centralized; they were smaller; they were younger; and they were vigorously seeking adequate solutions to educational problems. Perhaps they have lost some of their power of adaptation, a power closely related to problems of rigidity, uniformity, and conformity.

Problems of rigidity, uniformity, and conformity.—Societies gen-

[3] Cleve O. Westby, *Local Autonomy for School-Communities in Cities; An Inquiry into Educational Potentials, Channels of Communication, and Leeway for Local Action* (New York, 1947).

erally are characterized by rigidity in many practices. Uniformity and conformity tend to be more highly valued than variety and initiative. This is true in spite of the fact that advances are made through new approaches. These characteristics of societies are especially pronounced in large-scale organizations. They develop as a result of many factors: the security found in doing the job in the established way, the satisfaction from knowing how it is done throughout the organization, the relative ease of administration where problems are met in an accepted manner rather than thought through and attacked in varied ways, the desire to be able to report the manner in which the job is done, the tendency to lack confidence in discretion exercised by others, the problems which may result from the exercise of discretion by others, the belief that a higher efficiency is achieved through uniformity, the fear of establishing precedent, the fear of failure through a new approach—which failure is much more likely to be noted than even larger failures resulting from action conforming to established practice.

Problems of inefficiency resulting from delay.—Evidence of these problems is readily found in large organizations. Teachers and principals frequently state that they do not ask for materials because the need will no longer exist by the time the materials are supplied. The amount of paper work is also a frequent complaint—paper work that in the eyes of the employee yields no return. Problems of this type are more acute in public organizations than in private ones because of the complexity of the laws affecting public organizations and the necessity for financial accountability for public funds. Delays also occur because of the pressure of other jobs demanding attention, the attitudes of administrators and staff, the failure of those in control to appreciate local needs, and the lack of adequate staff and materials. Many of these difficulties, including excessive paper work and centralization of control over even minor details, result from a search for security and from a lack of confidence in the ability of others to exercise discretion effectively. Procedure can become so long and involved, the New York Management Survey[4] demonstrated, that only a man of courage and foresight would dare initiate action. These problems are serious not only in the loss resulting from failure to satisfy needs, but probably even more in the attitudes which they engender among employees and others. How many citizens fail to participate in securing a needed change in a service because they believe they will be defeated by red tape?

Problems of communication.—In large organizations problems of communication increase sharply. The man in the field confronted with

[4] George D. Strayer and Louis E. Yavner, directors, *Administrative Management of the School System of New York City* (New York, 1951).

a problem frequently has little or no personal contact with the person who makes decisions. Those in intermediate roles have too little discretionary power. Standards and regulations become substitutes for thought. Circulars and bulletins attempt communication, but with limited success. How can personal contact between those who face the problem and those who make the decisions be achieved when the distance between the problem and the point of decision-making is great? "The art of the proper exercise of remote control is a difficult one, and there are many who are unaware of its pitfalls. The further an officer is from the practical results of the decisions he is making, the greater the temptation to work to a rule and to give standardized replies."[5]

Problems pertaining to the development of administrators.—It is exceedingly difficult in a large organization to create opportunities for the exercise of discretion and initiative equal to the opportunities found within smaller independent units. Since much of the preparation of administrators occurs on the job, opportunities for developing administrative talent are thus more limited in large-scale organizations. Some of them have taken steps, such as the creation of teams of young administrators who are given various special assignments, to compensate for this loss.

Another problem is the tendency of organization to seek "safe" men for appointment and promotion—those who will not be disturbing. These men may not disrupt the smooth functioning machine, but neither will they be those with creative power or the greatest administrative talent. Even when an organization is aware of the mediocrity of safe men and seeks to avoid their appointment or promotion, the employees often believe that it is the organization policy to favor such men. Thus through the informal structure, the attitudes and work of aspiring administrators are greatly influenced.

Problems pertaining to lay understanding and action.—In a democracy an understanding of public service is important. It is the basis of citizen participation in all public services and all issues of public concern. In small organizations lay responsibility can be easily established and maintained. Local lay boards make decisions; inquiries are raised and answered by those residing in a small area. In a large organization, however, fewer laymen are concerned, and those few are frequently found at the center of the organization. Laymen generally are not interested in devoting time and effort to an enterprise in which they have no fixed responsibilities. Thus they miss the educational

[5] Emmeline W. Cohen, *Autonomy and Delegation in County Government* (London, n.d.), p. 68.

experiences which come from participating in and having responsibility for an organization. To a considerable degree people learn to govern through governing, but serving in an advisory capacity to a large organization which the individual does not feel competent to influence is hardly sufficient.

It should also be noted that lay control may be negative and unconscious as well as positive and conscious. Thus in the Newark[6] schools it was reported that abundant resources to provide a modern educational program were not used because the community did not know it had control and did not give the go-ahead signal. Because of the attitudes of the community or of uninformed parents, teachers continued to use methods which they knew were not the best.

Problems of morale.—It is claimed by some that, other things being equal, the larger the organization the lower the morale.[7] Problems of morale are generated by the conditions already discussed: delay in securing action, stress upon conformity rather than upon creativity, difficulty in communicating with those in authority, lack of discretion by those to whom one is responsible. They also may be caused by the sheer size of the organization and by its impersonal characteristics. Some large organizations have made noteworthy efforts to decentralize in order to raise morale and have had a significant measure of success. Problems of morale resulting from large organization thus seem to be subject to substantial improvement by the alert organization.

Problems of the bureaucrat.—Large organizations inevitably have bureaucrats. They are essential if the organization is to operate, but they need not have the characteristics generally attributed to them. The fact, however, that these characteristics do appear very often is an indication of the problems to be confronted. The problems of the bureaucrat have changed little since Bagehot wrote that it is inevitable "that bureaucrats will care more for routine than for results; or, as Burke put it, 'that they will think the substance of business not to be much more important than the forms of it.' Their whole education and all the habit of their lives make them do so. They are brought young into the particular part of the public service to which they are attached; they are occupied for years in learning its forms—afterwards, for years too, in applying these forms to trifling matters. They are, to use the phrase of an old writer, 'but the tailors of business; they cut the clothes, but they do not find the body.' Men so trained must come to think the

[6] Division of Field Studies, Institute of Educational Research, Teachers College, Columbia University: The Report of a Survey of the Public Schools of Newark, New Jersey (New York, 1942), p. 46.

[7] "Effects of Great Size in Industry and School," *London Times, Educational Supplement* (March 12, 1954), p. 247.

routine of business not a means, but an end—to imagine the elaborate machinery of which they form a part, and from which they derive their dignity, to be a grand and achieved result, not a working and changeable instrument . . ."[8]

It is important to note that "the source of trouble is frequently lower in the hierarchy of officials, and this is more difficult to deal with, because at the level at which it occurs, officers are less predominantly concerned with the ultimate function of the service, than with the machinery of the office, securing returns, keeping accounts, and so on. An appreciation of ends at this level requires a certain amount of imagination."[9]

Problems resulting from the concept of growth.—The large-scale organization frequently holds that growth should follow preëstablished plans rather than that each unit should pursue its own pattern of growth in accord with its own needs and characteristics. The fear of error, the awe of precedent, the desire to avoid any but the "right" procedure, the view that experimental work should be carried on only in a few selected units—all make it extremely difficult for the central administration to encourage the various units to recognize their own needs and to invent ways of meeting them. Even if the central administration would accept the desirability of the exercise of initiative by the units within it, it would have to do more than just express this view. Otherwise, the normal psychological drift toward uniformity would be more powerful than the liberalizing voice of the administration. Smaller units which are themselves responsible, although stimulated and helped by another authority such as the state government, probably have more chance to grow, to express views, to experiment, to be characterized by diversity though having a common goal.

Problems resulting from the concept of leadership.—The principal of a school sees his role rather differently than the superintendent of schools sees it. The principal may see his area of action as one extremely limited, probably more limited than is intended, for expectancies and various psychological forces are often more powerful than is realized. He may see his role as developing an institution in accord with central office regulations. Even if he wishes to experiment, he does so within limits, real or imagined, and in accord with established procedures. If he lacks initiative, he may frequently seek regulations or decisions at the center since this is an easy and safe way to resolve problems.

The superintendent of schools of the small system, on the other hand,

[8] Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (London, 1898), pp. 193–194.
[9] Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

who is not a part of a centralized organization, may have to work things through with the lay citizens, the lay board of education, and his staff, with fewer crutches to depend upon. Thus there is more independent action and more desire to act on the basis of a study of the situation. The area within which there is opportunity for leadership thus seems to be wider, but of course leadership is not necessarily or inevitably exercised. In the centralized organization one must ask: How do we avoid having heads of units seek the answer at the center rather than seeking it at the level of the problem itself? How do we create and insure understanding of desirable, wide limits for leadership? How are the limiting and inevitable psychological controls to be overcome?

In conclusion it should be noted that the problems of the large-scale organization are peculiarly significant for education. This is true for two reasons. A major objective of education is the development of men in accord with their potentialities. An organization that exists for this purpose cannot afford to frustrate the continued development of those associated with the enterprise: parents, teachers, administrators, children, and citizens. To do so is certainly to be self-contradictory. Again, education is an especially personal, intimate, fundamental matter. Many believe that it impinges on the values and behavior of men considerably more than does organization for the production of the material needs of society. This, of course, is not to deny the significance of the size and manner of the organization of society for various other purposes, nor that through all of their diverse activities men in a democracy should have opportunities for growth.

III. BASES FOR ACTION: 1944

To understand the English Education Act of 1944 and especially the divisional administration features, it is essential to present the background briefly.

Development of secondary education.—This subject has dominated the English educational scene throughout the present century. At the beginning of the century secondary education was limited to "public school" and grammar school education. "Public school" was private, and tuition was charged. Students were selected largely on a social basis. The secondary school prepared for the universities, but also provided terminal education for many of the upper social classes. Beginning in 1902 publicly financed grammar schools were developed by the counties and county boroughs. Later the upper elementary schools

introduced some practical studies and became less strictly elementary in their offerings. A number of local education authorities[10] reorganized their elementary schools for all children 11 or 12 to 14 years old who were not in grammar schools. Some county boroughs instituted central schools with a technical or commercial bias for groups of children 11 or 12 to 14 or 15 years old. But all this development was in name a part of elementary education.

It was clear by 1944 that secondary education would need to be provided for all children more than 11 years old. Secondary education for all in England, however, did not mean comprehensive secondary schools. It meant continuing the public and private (frequently publicly aided) grammar schools, developing secondary schools which were combination grammar-technical or modern-technical or grammar-modern, and in a few instances developing comprehensive schools in which the grammar, technical, and modern "streams" would be clearly separated or a little or even greatly fused. It meant developing educational opportunities in accord with the interests and abilities of the secondary age group. Without doing violence to preëstablished institutions, it meant encouraging new institutions to develop programs free from predetermined patterns. The Minister of Education, Miss Wilkinson, stated: "It is important not to make plans that are too rigid . . . The schools must have freedom to experiment, room to grow, variety for the sake of freshness, for the fun of it even. Laughter in the classroom, self-confidence growing every day, eager interest instead of bored uniformity, this is the way to produce from our fine stock the Britons who will have no need to fear the new scientific age, but will stride into it, heads high, determined to master science and to serve mankind."[11]

Some of the old grammar schools served extended geographic areas. Some of the newer single-stream schools would do likewise. It became increasingly difficult to decide which children should attend which kind of school as pressure increased for the opportunity to attend the schools which had prestige and which led to desired positions. This complex of secondary schools and secondary education was not a matter for small local authorities. Many which had provided elementary schools were not fitted to grapple effectively with this problem. The planning and development work which had to be done in this area in the decade following 1944 was stupendous.

[10] Since 1902 all local educational administrative districts with powers granted them by Parliament, whether for purposes of elementary education only or for both elementary and secondary education, have been known as local education authorities. Thus county and county boroughs are local education authorities.

[11] Ministry of Education, *The New Secondary Education*, Pamphlet No. 9 (1947), p. 5.

Development of further education.—In the early decades of the twentieth century adult education advanced significantly. It offered secondary or extended educational opportunities to those who had been denied them. It was carried on by voluntary associations (state aided), such as the Workers Educational Association, or by local education authorities through their evening institutes and technical colleges.

The war years brought an unprecedented demand for technical education of civilians and members of the armed services. The technical colleges met this need in remarkable fashion and in the process ceased to be evening schools; they operated for twenty-four hours a day. They furthered also social and cultural activities and a broader program than that of the predominantly evening schools. When, following the war, England recognized her serious economic plight, she saw in the technical colleges an important instrument of survival. They developed rapidly with a great influx of students who, being released from employment, spent one or two days a week in them. Thus a great advance occurred in technical education in a decade.

At the time of the passage of the Education Act in 1944 a broad mandate for the establishment of county colleges was approved. It was hoped that all young workers might be required to continue their education in these institutions and that an increasing number of full-time students beyond the compulsory school age would attend. It was hoped, too, that worth-while leisure-time interests would be offered to all persons able and willing to profit from them. As a result of the severe competition for men and materials, the county colleges have not yet been opened, although the technical colleges have continued to grow.

Among other recent adult education movements has been the establishment by local education authorities of residential colleges which usually offer short courses of either a liberal or industrial nature. The high hopes for further education which Britain held in 1944, based at least in part upon the extraordinary vigor of adult education movements during the war, made it clear that local education authorities should be large and wealthy. Small local units are ill equipped to develop a broad program of adult education.

The head and board of governors of the individual school.—Administration of education in England cannot be understood without an appreciation of the role of the headmaster. To a greater degree perhaps than in any other society the school is his. He selects the staff either with or without the advice and assistance of the central office staff, and he decides the program of studies and activities. He determines the admission of students. He sees the development of the school as his life

work and aims to give it a distinctive character. All these things he does with the coöperation of a staff that takes pride in its independence in matters of teaching. This concept of the head comes down from the days when schools were largely controlled by private foundations. It persists and is encouraged even now, when most children are in publicly provided schools, but of course the head recognizes his responsibility to the community. He is assisted in maintaining his position and in developing the school by a board of governors or managers to whom he reports developments in the school and from whom he seeks advice. This board also, especially in secondary schools, has a large part in the initial selection of the head. Some boards, especially for new modern secondary schools, devote many hours per month to reviewing the proposals of the heads for program, staff, organization, and other matters pertaining to the life of the school.

Statutes require the drafting of articles of government for each secondary school and the approval of the plan of government by the Minister of Education. For the voluntary schools, those established by a voluntary body[12] though now a part of the total secondary education system, the board of governors submits the articles of government to the minister for approval. The plan for other schools is submitted by the local education authority. Boards of managers of primary schools are provided for in rules of government which must be drawn up by the local education authority but which do not need to be approved by the minister. With these boards it is hoped that each school will have also a body of citizens, at least some of whom have had educational experience, who will take a special interest in the school.

In general, this description of the work of the head and of the board of governors or managers is accurate. Of course exceptions exist. With the tremendous increase in the number of schools, especially at the elementary level, it has not always been possible to achieve the desired pattern of organization. In a few instances the director of education[13] may wish to exercise considerably more power than is implied here, and may succeed in doing so. In some communities there are schools without boards of governors or managers. Or a single board may be responsible for a number of schools, since it is difficult at times to secure an adequate board for each school. In spite of these shortcomings the basic pattern remains and provides considerable decentralization. Many matters such as curriculum are not determined either by the

[12] The voluntary body is generally, though not necessarily, a religious organization.

[13] The director of education is the chief administrative officer of the local education authority. He is the equivalent of the superintendent of schools in the United States.

local education authority or by the divisional administration units. These authorities see their role only as providing the resources which enable the head and his staff to organize and carry on a school.

Local administrative units for education.—The beginnings of schools in England were extremely diverse. Until a later date than in some other countries in Western Europe, education was considered a church responsibility. The churches continue to play a role through the boards of managers of their schools which now have been amalgamated with the public education service. Even today, the education committees of the counties or county boroughs and the boards of the divisional administrative units frequently coöpt members of the clergy.

The beginning of what would generally be regarded as public education was the Education Act of 1870 which provided for the establishment of *ad hoc* school boards. This Act was a compromise, enacted after long debate, to provide for the one-third of the children who were receiving no education. School boards had authority to provide only elementary education, but for some years a number of them interpreted elementary education broadly. The Act recognized and encouraged the voluntary schools of the various religious denominations and provided that the school boards should only "fill the gaps" in educational provisions.

Born of bitter strife and fought over by the religious sects, the school boards were never popular bodies. There were 5,268 of them—far too many. Many of them administered extremely small rural areas. Their failure to win approval "has made it difficult for any one since to advocate the principle of entrusting the care of education to local authorities specially constituted for that sole purpose. But it was unfair to base the case against the *ad hoc* authority in this misleading precedent; for the school boards labored under grave disadvantages . . ."[14] In spite of these problems the school boards, especially in some cities, did excellent work in establishing the system of public education which has continued to expand ever since. In 1902 when the proposed Education Act provided for elimination of the boards, there was wide-spread approval. In part, this elimination was the result of the work of the Webbs, who described the administrative situation as follows: "Our educational machinery in England has got into a notable mess. Some places have two or three public authorities spending rates and taxes on different sorts of schools, whilst others have none at all. In one town the clever boy or girl finds in the infant school the lowest rung of an unbroken ladder to the university, whilst in the very next county there is no

[14] W. O. Lester Smith, *Education in Great Britain* (London, 1949), p. 115.

rescue for talented poverty from the ship or plough. Some school districts are too small to maintain a decent primary school; others are large enough to run a university . . ."[15]

The Webbs then proposed that the counties and county boroughs should be the local administrative units with "one public education authority, and one only" in each district. They also proposed that in order that the "activity of the energetic and growing towns" should not even seem to be limited, local administration, "including the whole management of the institutions in the towns, should be delegated . . . to a responsible local committee . . ."[16] These committees would be allotted a definite sum annually plus any special tax the borough councils in their area could be induced to levy. Thus they anticipated the Education Act of 1944.

In 1902 England was not ready to reduce so drastically the number of administrative units. The education bill as introduced provided only for the counties and county boroughs as administrative units. But the Education Act as passed stipulated that the county boroughs should offer all forms of education, and that the county councils should offer secondary education throughout the county and elementary education in those parts of the county which were not Part III authorities (municipal boroughs of 10,000 population and more, and urban districts of 20,000 population and more). Part III authorities (those with powers specified in Part III of the Act) were empowered to offer elementary education only. There were 169 of these. Thus, including the 146 counties and county boroughs, there was a total of 315 local education authorities.

Forty years later the structural framework for local administration of education was the same, but many things had changed. Population, of course, had changed greatly. Some county boroughs with 10,000 population in 1902 had approximately the same number in 1944, but others had populations of far more than 100,000 by 1944. In 1902 the vast majority of children never progressed beyond the elementary schools. By 1944 reorganization had been much discussed and had been effected in some communities. Development of a coördinated educational policy and a program with responsibility for elementary education in some areas in Part III authorities and for elementary education in other communities and for secondary education throughout the county in the county education authority was exceedingly difficult. Hence it was clear by 1944 that the local education structure was quite

[15] Sydney Webb and Beatrice Webb, *The Education Muddle and the Way Out*, Fabian Tract No. 106 (London, 1901), p. 3.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

inadequate and that substantial modification would be needed if education were to move forward. Furthermore "elementary" education for children 6 to 14 years old was now to disappear as a legal entity and in its place came "primary" education for children less than 11, to be followed by secondary education.

Relationship between education and local government.—As indicated in the preceding section, the school boards of England were *ad hoc* bodies. It has been said that *ad hoc* bodies were resorted to because there was no adequate unit of local government that could accept responsibility for education in 1870, when the Act was passed. At least in part because of the unsatisfactory experience with *ad hoc* school boards, the prevailing view in England has been and continues to be that education should be a function of local government. There are those who hold that it is the most important function of local government and that therefore it should be uppermost in mind when reorganization of local government is undertaken. It is widely agreed that a reorganization is greatly needed, but that no government cares to tackle the problem because of its difficulty.

The Webbs opposed the *ad hoc* school boards in 1901 with the following argument: "It is now often urged . . . that the business of providing and managing schools is of so special a nature that it is best that it be entrusted to a separate public body elected *ad hoc* (this is to say, for this special business only). This is not the reason why school boards were invented . . . the school board as we know it, is merely one of the few survivors of what was once a large class . . ."[17] As towns grew new needs arose, and since there was no general system of local government, these *ad hoc* bodies were established to meet them. "The success of the Town and County Councils, with their varied functions, is evidence that separate bodies for separate services are superfluous . . ."[18] The Webbs urged further that providing drains, caring for the insane, preventing infectious diseases, providing music in the parks, and providing for the poor are problems as different, difficult, and important as administering the schools.

The Education Act of 1902 discontinued the *ad hoc* school boards. In their place there were to be education committees established by the council of each county and county borough and by the council of those municipal boroughs or urban districts which had local education powers. The education committee was to be composed of a majority of the members of the council and, in addition, coöpted members selected by the council because of their special experience, interest, knowledge

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

of the area, or ability to contribute. Coöpted members frequently were selected from the clergy, the teaching staff, the medical profession, college or university faculties in the area, and from among those who through organizations had shown an interest in public education. In later years they were drawn also from management and labor. Coöpted members were given full powers and in many communities they gave outstanding service. The education committee in many instances developed a strong sense of independence and under the leadership of the education office functioned with little interference from the council after its estimates for the year were approved.

In general the close relation of education and local government served the interest of both. It meant that in many communities all activities pertaining to children and youth were assigned to the education committee. Thus a high degree of coördination of education with services such as public libraries, placement of youth in industry and follow-up, child labor law enforcement, care for juvenile offenders, and the development of youth centers was secured. In 1944 the question of an *ad hoc* education authority does not seem to have been raised. Today a few educators would welcome it because since the last war county councils have lost many of their responsibilities, and consequently county or town clerks, treasurers, architects, and their respective committees have moved in on education, sometimes destroying or at least sharply reducing the independence of action which the education committee had known. In any case the Education Act of 1944 continued education as a part of local government both at the local authority level and at the divisional administration level. Any further reorganization of the general local government structure today (reorganization has been promised by parliamentary leaders though specific proposals have not been offered) would certainly mean reorganization for education.

Relation between the local authority and the central government.—This relationship is of genuine significance in our study. An attempt had been made to emphasize the responsibility of the local authority in education matters and to see the central authority as stimulator and guide. It was hoped that the excellent spirit of local-central relations could be captured in the local education authority–divisional administration unit relationship.

The relationship which characterized the central-local authorities for almost a half century before 1944 has frequently been described as a partnership. The central authority or senior partner was seen largely as an instigating and helping agency of status and power roughly equal to that of the local authorities. Stimulation was provided in various

ways. The central authority could, for example, study problems and issue reports. Its teams of inspectors could study a local school carefully and prepare a report for consideration by the local authority. Partnership also characterized the relation of the local education officers and members of the ministry staff. The size of the country made it possible for local officers to know and to be known well by the central staff. Problems were thus generally worked out in consultation, and education advanced through a partnership.

The ministry staff was composed of carefully selected civil servants who devoted their lives to the work. They had accepted the partnership concept developed by Selbe-Bigge[19] during his term as Minister of Education and had achieved much through it. They saw strong and independent local authorities as a most important asset, and they forced action only after long consideration. They subscribed to a remarkable degree to the statement that "the only uniformity we want is that each teacher shall think for himself and develop those materials and methods which best meet the needs of the children." This view they would apply also to local education authorities.

However, England in 1944 was different from the England of the 'thirties. It had a new vision. It now saw education as vastly more important than before, and it felt extremely unhappy because some services had not been offered and as a result some children had never known decent educational provisions, let alone anything approaching "equality of educational opportunity." It was bitter toward those local education authorities which had been laggard and at times uncoöperative even during the strains of the war years. It was also determined that in the future, responsibility for insuring the attainment of the broad new goals should be firmly fixed. Therefore the old concept of a board of education exercising a gentle "superintendence" was replaced in the Education Act of 1944 by that of a Minister of Education who could be held responsible and who was empowered "to promote the education of the people of England and Wales and the progressive development of institutions devoted to that purpose, and to secure the effective execution by local authorities, under his control and direction, of the national policy of providing a varied and comprehensive educational service in every area."[20]

The Act further empowered the minister to prevent local authorities from acting "unreasonably." The minister is the judge of what is "unreasonable" without appeal to courts, the minister, of course, being

[19] Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[20] A. E. Ikin, *The Education Act 1944 With Explanatory Notes* (London, 1944), p. 1.

responsible to Parliament. This provision was inserted by Parliament and was not in the original bill. It is thus easy to understand that the Minister of Education, Mr. Butler, was applauded by Parliament when he said that the Education Act intended that the minister should "lead boldly and not follow timidly."[21]

Thus balance of power was changed by statute. "Happily" says Smith "the old spirit of partnership . . . has survived the catastrophic change." There is much evidence that this is true, though there is no question where responsibility is placed. Tradition is strong, however, and administration is men as well as laws. The ministry has acted in such a manner that those interested in diversity are less fearful than they were. Perhaps a desirable synthesis has been effected between "local initiative and national direction." Some of the dangers of too much authority at the center and of too great centralization can be avoided, as can the danger of irresponsibility at some points in the field or at the circumference.

In any case the ministry wanted large and competent local units with which it could work. It therefore was adamant on the point that county boroughs and counties alone could be accepted as local education authorities. But those who may have represented vested interests or who favored more decentralization were not easily dissuaded. And they had behind them a philosophy of administration and a concept of local responsibility which were not to be given up readily—even by a nation in crisis.

IV. THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1944

England planned bold educational advances through outstanding legislation in 1870, 1902, 1918, and 1944. Action in each of these instances was related to a major challenge to society and a resultant period of self-examination. Especially was this true in 1944. England in the darkest days of war had stood resolutely and had formulated idealistic visions of a vastly improved society. Out of years of depression as a background, she emerged from war with a proper pride, but not without having suffered greatly and not without having resolved in her mind problems previously regarded as insurmountable obstacles to the desired future.

The common struggle was sufficiently bitter to have caused all to recognize that what Disraeli had called one people split into "two nations" (social classes) was indefensible. It was sufficiently taxing

[21] W. O. Lester Smith, "The Administration of Education," *London Times, Educational Supplement* (March 5, 1954), p. 220.

that basic human worth emerged without regard to social class. It revealed to all what previously had been apparent only to a few: how shocking the differences in opportunity and development for Englishmen were, and how closely they were related to class structure. The people, to a surprising degree, were of one mind. These things could not continue.

The National Union of Teachers spoke for many when it stated that it was "profoundly convinced that equal educational opportunity for all must be an essential characteristic of any State system of education for this country if it is to continue its democratic form of government." It defined "equality of educational opportunity" as "the application of the principle 'that the accidents of parental circumstances or the place of residence shall not preclude any child from receiving the education from which he is best capable of profiting.' "[22]

In this exhilarating period of "ferment," as Dent called it, Prime Minister Churchill, in an address to the nation on March 21, 1943, stated that "the future of the world is to the highly educated races . . ."[23] and declared his conviction that equality of educational opportunity was essential and within the means of the nation. This declaration from the great war leader, who by no means favored an overextension of education and social welfare measures, convinced many that equality of educational opportunity was attainable.

A Proposed New Education Act

It was thus during a period of widespread public interest and high anticipation that the government—representing both major parties—prepared and released its proposals for a new Education Act. Legislation was not introduced for some months because the government wanted ample opportunity for discussion. The proposal called for a fundamental reorganization of the educational system to create greater unity than had previously existed. It provided ". . . that the statutory system of public education shall cease to be severally administered for the purposes of elementary and higher education respectively, and be organized in three progressive stages to be known as primary education, secondary education, and further education."[24] Local education authorities were to be given a broad mandate rather than a series of specific ones "to contribute towards the mental, moral, and physical

[22] H. C. Dent, *Education in Transition* (London, 1944), p. 207.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 232.
[24] *Educational Reconstruction*, Report presented by the President of the Board of Education to Parliament by Command of His Majesty (July, 1943) (Cmd 6458), His Majesty's Stationery Office, p. 7.

development of the community by securing the provision of efficient education throughout these stages for all persons in the area capable of profiting thereby."[25]

Education was therefore to be a continuous process, and equality of educational opportunity was to be attained; diversity of offering was encouraged, though not in such manner as to weaken social unity.

The proposal called for secondary education for all beyond the age of 11. This required reorganizing elementary schools and developing new types of secondary schools, raising the age for leaving school to 15 and then to 16 as soon as practicable, developing a coördinated program of further education, expanding nursery schools and Youth Service, and extending facilities to insure the health and well-being of children and young people.

To realize these goals, the central administration would need to be stronger. In addition, local education authorities would need to be sufficiently competent and wealthy to formulate development plans for education in their areas for all three levels or stages (elementary, secondary, and further). They would also have to be able to implement the plans. The government determined that county borough councils and county councils should be the local education authorities. This meant abolishing the Part III authorities, among which had been some of the most vigorous local education authorities in the nation. Some of them, however, were not large enough to accept responsibility for further education. The government therefore chose a large unit—the largest one available—in order to have a unit competent to accept the responsibility to be placed upon it. But how was this to be reconciled with the desire for the maintenance and even the strengthening of participation by the people?

The government suggested that any plan "for the constitution of local education authorities must be such as to preserve and stimulate local interest in educational affairs. It is, therefore, proposed to require county authorities to prepare schemes for the constitution and functions of district education committees. For this purpose the county will be divided into areas, each area consisting of one or more county districts, provided that any county district with a minimum total population of 60,000 or a minimum elementary school population of 7,000 children will have the right to have a separate district committee for its area. District committees will be entrusted with the general duty of keeping the educational needs of the area under review and making recommendations to the county education committee, and with such

[25] *Ibid.*

other functions as may be delegated to them by the county education committee."[26]

It is interesting to note that this proposal was to apply only to the counties and not to the county boroughs—this in spite of the fact that some county boroughs were large enough geographically and with sufficient population to justify decentralization, to keep education close to the people. Of course the county boroughs had been local education authorities for some years, and they did generally represent more cohesive units than the counties, some of which were extremely large geographically and contained many distinct and somewhat independent communities. However, absence of logic suggests that the plan offered was a compromise and in large part the result of demands by Part III authorities. Some hold that it was largely a compromise and that the desire to further local interest in education was not fundamentally involved.

The Education Act and Divisional Administration

Whatever the basis for the proposal that district committees review the educational needs of the areas and make recommendations—and such committees had existed for some years in several of the larger counties—it proved to be far from satisfactory to those interested in decentralization within the county. In the discussions following the release of the government proposals, vigorous representations were made for strengthening the district committees. As a result, when the government finally introduced the education bill, it had been considerably modified. Some who were concerned hold that the government found it necessary to make these changes in order to save the bill. The Act as passed stated: "For the purpose of securing that the functions of local education authorities will be exercised with due regard to the circumstances affecting different parts of their areas and with the coöperation of people having special knowledge of such circumstances, provision shall be made by schemes (hereinafter referred to as 'schemes of divisional administration') for partitioning the areas of authorities into such divisions as may be conducive to efficient and convenient administration and for constituting bodies of persons (hereinafter referred to as 'divisional executives') for the purpose of exercising on behalf of the authorities, in such of the divisions as may be specified in the schemes, such functions relating to primary and secondary education as may be so specified."[27]

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 30.
[27] Ikin, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

The Act further provided that the council of a borough or urban district with a population of 60,000 or more or with 7,000 children on the rolls of the public elementary schools could claim excepted status (that is, it would become a divisional unit in accord with a plan formulated by the council in consultation with the local education authority) and that it would not become a part of any other unit of divisional administration. The minister was required to grant this status under these conditions and could grant it to other boroughs where he believed it justified by special circumstances.

In all other cases, the local (county) education authority was required to formulate the plan of divisional administration and to submit it to the minister for approval. Statute requires that every scheme of divisional administration provide for the establishment of each body which is to be a divisional executive, define the functions which the divisional executives are authorized to exercise on behalf of the local education authority, make provisions for these divisional executives to appoint committees and subcommittees, define the relationship of divisional executives to the local education authority and its committees, provide that every divisional executive submit for the approval of the local education authority all estimates of expenditure and the accounts incurred by the executive on behalf of the authority, provide that disputes between the local education authority and a divisional executive shall be determined by the minister, and arrange for other matters which appear expedient or which the minister may require.

The Act provided that no scheme shall authorize any divisional executive to borrow money or to raise a rate. It also provided that further educational functions could be delegated to divisional executives.

Considerable debate regarding various provisions of this bill had occurred in Parliament. Many members of Parliament from Part III authorities were not satisfied that the proposed divisional administration would give their districts sufficient independence for a "life of their own." They feared that their districts would be leveled down to the county level and hence would not be able to continue as vigorous progressive authorities. They noted that some of the Part III authorities were larger than some of the smaller counties and county boroughs. They feared that the divisional authorities would not have real power and therefore would not be able to command top administrative talent. They wanted assurance that the divisional executives would be empowered to select their own administrative officer and their teachers. They asked that the powers of divisional executives be increased in the Act or that the larger Part III authorities be made full-fledged local

education authorities responsible for primary, secondary, and further education.

The government replied that it recognized that some counties and county boroughs were too small to be efficient local education authorities, and it hoped that in such cases the local education authorities would coöperate in providing certain services for those counties and county boroughs. The government spokesmen said that they had to accept the structural organization of local government as it was, since education had to advance and could not await development of a more adequate local government structure. They noted that if they accepted as local education authorities districts smaller than counties and county boroughs, there was no stopping place. Moreover, reducing the number of units was a great step forward in equalizing rates and educational opportunity. They wanted the statute regarding divisional executives broad and general so that diversity might characterize the program and powers might vary in relation to the competency of the local divisions. They stated that the schemes should provide for the election of the divisional administrative officers. The powers of the divisional executives, they held, would be so great that their sessions should be open to the public, as distinguished from the meetings of boards of managers and governors. The schemes were to be formulated coöperatively by the county education authority and the divisions, with the minister serving as arbitrator where necessary. Furthermore, the right of appeal to the minister would exist, and outstanding divisional authorities would thus be enabled to keep in the forefront.

That the government had accepted the idea of genuine or substantive delegation was evident from the statement of the minister who at one point during committee hearings stated: "What the Committee should do for the remaining part of today's sitting is to try to see that delegated responsibilities are real and genuine and that districts can have a local life of their own."[28]

The education bill had been carefully prepared during a period of three or more years. Large numbers of individuals and groups had participated in the discussion of what later seemed to be the government proposal. Because of this careful preparation and the general recognition of need, the bill was well received. Reduction in the number of local education authorities was the most vigorously fought feature. However, the government stood firm, having offered the divisional administration compromise, and the bill became law.

[28] *Parliamentary Debates, Commons,* Vol. 396 (1944), Col. 2072–2073.

Schemes of Divisional Administration

The ministry then circulated a memorandum on "Schemes of Divisional Administration." It denied the desirability of a "hard and fast model scheme" since "uniformity would be irreconcilable with the wide differences in the circumstances and requirements of different areas."[29] At the same time it believed that a statement of general principles and some guidance in matters to be considered would be welcomed.

According to the ministry, the object of the schemes was that within the framework of national policy the educational service should be administered in the counties under the general control and supervision of the local education authority, but not losing "the inspiration to be derived from more immediate local interest and local initiative."[30]

The ministry stated that the areas selected for divisional units "must have a sufficient population to constitute a reasonable educational unit for the purposes of primary and secondary education. They should also possess sufficient community of interest, or should offer prospects of developing before long such community of interest, and they should possess some conveniently accessible administrative center within the area or adjacent to it. On the other hand, the area of a divisional executive should not be so large as to prejudice the possibility of securing the values that the scheme is designed to secure—the bringing to bear on local administration of local knowledge and interest."[31] It was then suggested that a population of 60,000 should generally be regarded as a minimum figure, though other matters, such as geographical ones, should also be considered.

The ministry suggested that a divisional executive might ordinarily be composed of 20 to 30 members of whom a majority might well be named by the local government district councils of the area, with the remainder being representatives of the county education committee and "other persons of experience in education and persons acquainted with the needs of the divisional area,"[32] including, where appropriate, representatives of local industry and agriculture. Divisional executives for areas coterminous with borough and urban council districts would be the councils of such districts. These councils, however, were urged to set up an advisory education committee with coöpted members. Employees of the local authority, including teachers, were eligible for appointment to divisional executives.

[29] Ministry of Education, *Local Administration of Education, Schemes of Divisional Administration,* Circular No. 5 (September 15, 1944), p. 3.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 4.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

The ministry indicated that the essence of the scheme should be the definition of the functions of the divisional executive and its relation to the local education authority. The powers which must remain with the authority were listed as: (1) borrowing money and setting rates, and thus ultimately approval of expenditures, (2) developing the plan of the area as a whole, (3) formulating the general educational policy of the area within the national framework, (4) insuring that an adequate standard of educational provision is maintained, (5) approving major school-building developments, and (6) establishing regulations of a general character regarding such matters as transportation and school meals to insure reasonable uniformity of practice.[33]

Then turning to divisional executives, the ministry observed that their functions are executive and advisory, that a divisional executive differs from a district committee "in that on many matters its decisions will not be subject to confirmation by the Local Education Authority." Among the functions to be delegated, the following are suggested:

1. Assessment and review of educational needs of the area, in coöperation with planning and housing authorities.
2. Development of estimates (annually except in case of special or emergency needs) and submission of them for approval.
3. Care of school property within the estimates and supervision of the use of school premises.
4. Handling of requisitions for supplies.
5. Consideration of reports of His Majesty's inspectors and appropriate action on the basis of them.
6. Coördination of the work of the various secondary schools.
7. Enforcement of school attendance, setting of attendance areas for schools, arrangement for admission and transfer of pupils, arrangement for transportation, setting of holidays.
8. Provision for the welfare of pupils through direction of medical inspection and treatment, administration of school meals and milk, supply of clothing, aid in identifying handicapped children and in arranging their attendance at residential schools if necessary.[34]

The memorandum noted that administrative coöperation between the local education authority and divisional executives was essential to success and suggested that arrangements be made to foster it. Ample opportunity for friendly and thorough consultation before decisions were made was urged. In this spirit it was also suggested that divisional executives make representations and recommendations to the local education authority on any matter not delegated to them but affecting

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.

education of children in its area. Conversely it was held that the divisional executive should consider inquiries, representations, and recommendations made to it by the local education authority regarding any matter, whether delegated to it or not. The local education authorities were also urged to make their expert staff available to divisional executives and to maintain full contact between central officers and office staffs and divisional officers and office staffs.

Of particular concern and difficulty was the method of selecting the divisional education officer. He was to be legally an employee of the local education authority, but under the control of the divisional executive. Each divisional executive was to have an education officer, the local education authority and the divisional executive to be jointly associated in the appointment. Salary, term of office, and qualifications were to be set by the local education authority after consultation with the divisional executive. This education officer was to be the chief executive officer of the divisional executive, to advise it, to carry out its instructions, to prepare and submit returns to the local education authority, to prepare agenda and minutes of meetings of the divisional executive, and to perform such services for the local education authority as might be arranged (these regarding matters not delegated).

Appointment of headmasters and teachers was rather involved for here the boards of managers or governors, as well as the divisional executive and the local education authority, had responsibilities. All agreed that isolated, independent, and self-contained staffs should be avoided and that the possibility of transfer even from one division to another should remain open. It was also necessary that the role and responsibility of the head, the board of governors, and the divisional executive be recognized and maintained. Legally, of course, all personnel would be in the employ of the local education authority. Responsibility for training teachers and for attaining an educationally desirable degree of mobility of staff should be retained by the local education authority. For nonprofessional personnel, it was suggested that the local education authority might delegate full responsibility to the divisional executive.

The ministry noted that in regard to finance, although ultimate financial responsibility must rest with the local education authorities, the schemes could provide varying degrees of delegation. Disbursements of money could be made monthly to the divisional executives in total sum, or, upon certification by the divisional executive, materials and services could be paid for directly by the local education authority. In any case, when "estimates have been approved, the divisional executive should

have power to incur expenditure within the several limits of the amounts determined under each main head of the approved estimate."[35]

The government wisely cautioned at a number of points that the schemes were of great importance, but that equally important would be the attitude of those who carried on the work under them. It recognized that it had some control over the schemes but much less over the attitudes of those who would have to make them work.

V. DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN PRACTICE

Divisional administration thus came into being as a result of some hard-fought battles. Some scars remained. Some former Part III authorities were far from satisfied with the powers they had received. Some counties were disposed to grant as little power to the divisions as they could, regarding them only as remnants of vested interests which should be eliminated gradually.

Determination of the Divisional Units

In spite of these feelings, the job got under way rather promptly. The larger Part III authorities were entitled to take leadership in setting up the schemes under which they would operate. All other divisional schemes were to be proposed by the local education authorities after consultation with the local councils in the areas. Different counties followed different principles in setting up the divisions. Not all parts of a county had to be in a division. Some counties attempted to set up the areas on the basis of what they believed would be most desirable educationally from the point of view of attendance areas of secondary schools; others gave attention more particularly to the political or local government subdivisions of the county. In a few counties the divisions created were smaller than the 60,000 population figure suggested by the ministry. Some of these probably were justified by geograhical factors. One of the most common criticisms of divisional administration, however, is that many of the divisions created were too small. As a result they have not had many of the responsibilities which larger divisional areas have assumed. Furthermore, they have been much less able to attract the kind of men desired for service in the divisional executive or to secure an education officer of vision and outstanding competence.

Table 1 shows thirty-eight counties which have divisional administration units. More than half of them have a population of less than

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

TABLE 1

APPROXIMATE POPULATION (1951) OF 38 COUNTIES WITH DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

Q_1	300,000
Median	425,000
Q_3	825,000
Range	167,000–2,300,000
Five counties had a population of more than	1,500,000 each
Total	24,000,000

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS IN 38 COUNTIES

Q_1	1
Median	2
Q_3	8
Range	1–26
Counties with population in excess of 1,500,000 averaged 19 divisional units—range	11–26
Total	203

TABLE 3

POPULATION OF 167 DIVISIONAL UNITS REPORTING OUT OF TOTAL OF 203

30,000– 45,000	6
45,000– 60,000	32
60,000– 75,000	42
75,000–100,000	40
100,000–150,000	32
150,000–250,000	15

half a million. On the other hand, five have populations exceeding a million and a half. The largest county has a population in excess of two million and a quarter and is composed largely of a number of cities without county borough status that are a part of Greater London. Together these counties have considerably more than one-half the population of England. A large part of this population is contained within divisional units, for some of the larger counties divided the entire county area into such units; in the smaller counties the most populous section was generally formed into a divisional unit even if the more rural areas were not.

Two hundred and three divisional units were created, as shown in table 2. The median number of divisional units per county reflects the rather small population, that is, less than half a million, of more than half of the counties. On the other hand, one-fourth of the counties had 8 or more divisional units; and the counties with a population exceeding a million and a half had an average of 19 divisional units, with a range of 11 to 26.

The population of all the divisional units was not available; however, table 3 gives the population of 167 units. It will be noted that of these, 38 had a population of less than 60,000 whereas 47 had more than 100,000. The largest exceeded 200,000.

It is also interesting to note that the counties which had 10 or more divisional units were in many cases large in acreage as well as in population. Four of the five with populations exceeding a million and a half had a range of approximately 960,000 to 1,600,000 acres. The other one, Middlesex, which is a part of Greater London, had only 150,000 acres.

Formulation of the Schemes

After the divisional units were established, schemes for operation had to be drawn. In general, schemes for the old Part III authorities delegated greater powers to the divisional unit than did the schemes for other divisions. To a rather striking extent, however, the schemes followed the suggestions in the circular issued by the ministry. The schemes had to meet both the requirements of statute and the approval of the ministry. We wonder whether the hand of the ministry was not unduly prominent in drafting them. The ministry had made suggestions; it also had to approve. If there were disagreements, the ministry settled them, and its decision was binding. Possibly the ministry thought more of administrative ease and of responsible local education authorities than it did of the desirability of experimentation in meeting local interests and stimulating local initiative. The ministry was very determined that equality of opportunity be achieved in greater measure than in the past. This necessitated local education authorities with power. On the other hand, it is probably true that much more power was delegated than would have been if local education authorities had been more independent. The strong hand of the ministry is understandable considering its new responsibilities for education and the size of the job which confronted it in light of war damage and the desire to advance boldly. A strong hand was also probably essential because of the antagonism that existed in some of the counties between

the former Part III authorities and the county authorities and because of the view of at least some county authorities that divisional units were undesirable.

The schemes, in accord with statute, could be revised with the consent of the minister. During the ten years since their introduction little change has been made in them, however. A few counties have reconsidered the areas for divisions and have modified them. Relatively few controversies between a division and a local education authority have come to the minister for decision. A number of disputes which have been brought to the ministry, such as those pertaining to the salaries of Divisional Education Officers, have been held not to be of the type that would permit intervention by the ministry. Those disputes in which the minister has ruled have generally been the result of misunderstandings as to what was included in the powers delegated. They involved different interpretations of terms such as supplies and equipment. This is not to suggest that there have not been more fundamental disputes between local education authorities and divisions, disputes, for example, about policies for comprehensive or special-purpose secondary schools. These disputes, however, are not brought to the attention of the ministry since the scheme makes clear which party has the final decision in the matter.

The schemes provided for a lay body known as the divisional executive[36] with responsibility for seeing to it that the powers delegated were carried out. In the 44 old Part III authorities which claimed and were granted excepted status as provided under statute, the urban district council became the divisional executive. Powers were delegated to it. It was required, however, to set up an advisory committee to advise it on educational matters. To this committee the council generally named a group of 15 to 20 of its own members. The county council also usually named a few members (4–6), and sometimes the committee itself as thus constituted coöpted additional members because of their experience or interest in education or related fields.

In all divisions except the 44 former Part III authorities which were granted excepted status, the county established the divisional units with the help and advice of local councils. These county-created divisions included a number of the old Part III authorities which chose to be part of a larger division rather than to have excepted district status. In all divisional units established by the county, the divisional executive was organized as an *ad hoc* body. To it the county education committee named some of its own members or other citizens of the

[36] The divisional executive is essentially a board of education for the division.

district (about 5–7). Each of the various urban or rural district councils in the division named a number of members in proportion to the population of the division which its district represented. Together the councils named approximately 15 members. Frequently those named were members of the council which named them. Finally, the members of the divisional executive named by the county and the local districts either on their own initiative or on the recommendation of the district councils coöpted other citizens with special competencies. Coöpted members usually numbered at least 5 or 6, including several teachers in the schools of the division, who were nominated by the teachers as a group. The total membership of the divisional executive was thus generally between 25 and 30.

In some of the divisional units the members of the divisional executives were named only for one-year terms. In many divisions, however, the term was three years. Even in these cases, however, considerable turnover occurred because of personnel changes in the urban and district councils and the resulting changes in membership in the divisional executive.

A major initial difficulty of the divisional executive in some instances was the fact that the members did not have a common community background. Each member tended to be interested chiefly in the problems of his section of the division. The divisional executives were also handicapped in that they were *ad hoc* bodies not popularly elected. The old school boards had been *ad hoc* bodies, and many animosities continued to exist regarding them. Such bodies, because they are not popularly elected, are removed from public control and hence are unfavorably regarded. In general, public support for *ad hoc* bodies in England has never been strong.

Work of the Divisional Executives

The divisional executives generally have regular meetings monthly and special meetings on call. A few executives meet less frequently. Usually the minutes of the divisional executive meetings are sent to the local education authority to inform its members of actions taken. The minutes contain definite notations of actions taken: which are final (that is, pertain to matters delegated); which are recommendations to the local education authority only; which pertain to powers exercised in coöperation. The divisional executives generally have a number of subcommittees to consider issues and to prepare recommendations for consideration by the executives.

The character of the meetings of the divisional executives varies

considerably. In some communities the divisional executive has come to be regarded as the most important local government agency, and urban council members seek the opportunity to serve on it. In counties where substantial powers have been delegated, the meetings are quite like those of a board of education in the United States. The matters considered, the reports of the executive officer received, the policies debated and approved are significant. Lists of teachers and other employees are submitted for approval, correspondence and complaints from parents and others are received, bids for various maintenance jobs are received and acted upon, reports on the school lunch program are received, a change in the entrance age to a technical school is considered and recommendations are made to the county regarding it, reports on population growth and needed schoolhouse construction are submitted, bills are received and approved for payment.

In general, little consideration is given to curriculum matters except those bearing upon the educational purpose of a school and upon admission policies and procedures, for curriculum matters are the responsibility of the heads. However, reports of government inspectors on school evaluations are received, and recommendations are made to the heads in light of them. Again it should be said that the above description pertains largely to the better situations. Wherever the divisional executive does not feel that it has any significant responsibility, the meetings may be poorly attended and hurriedly and rather irresponsibly carried through. Even in the better situations there are those who feel that the divisional executive lacks the spark which it might have if it could levy taxes and thus have more leeway in determining its own income and actions. Others, however, hold that a very significant job is being done in adjusting the schools to the community, in adding a personal and local interest to the solution of the problems of parents, children, and teacher, and in developing and maintaining a desired school-housing program.

In some counties meetings of the divisional executives are held several days before the meetings of the county education committee. Thus recommendations of the division to the county can be acted upon quickly. In many counties arrangements have been made to expedite the consideration of urgent recommendations made by the divisions. This is frequently accomplished by conferring power upon chairmen of appropriate local education authority committees to act in certain matters and under certain circumstances. Thus although delays related to divided responsibility are still common in some counties, other counties have sharply reduced or even eliminated them through coöperative development of procedures.

DIVISION EDUCATION OFFICER

An extremely important problem for the county education committees and the divisional executives concerns the division education officer. Since he is an employee of the county, the schemes generally require that he be appointed by the county council, usually on the recommendation or nomination of a joint committee consisting of members of the county education committee and of the divisional executive. In some counties the divisional executive makes the appointment from a list of candidates that has been approved by the county council.

Equally important has been the matter of fixing his salary. Divisions can make recommendations for this, but the county council has the decision-making power. In determining the salary of the education officer, his training and experience, his responsibilities, and the salaries paid to other local (borough) officers such as town clerk, health officer, treasurer, headmasters, and members of the administrative staff of the county education office are considered. Since the establishment of divisional administration the salary of the education officer has been the source of much controversy in some counties, and salaries have been low in some instances, especially in comparison with those formerly paid the chief education officers of some of the larger old Part III authorities. In 1955, however, a nation-wide salary scale was agreed upon. This scale is acceptable to the national association of divisional executives and seems to improve their status. Under it division education officers in the larger divisions will reach salaries equal to those paid assistant and, in some instances, even deputy county education officers.

In the years immediately after the establishment of the divisional executives, many of the posts were filled by former Part III education officers. Gradually, however, they have retired, and younger men have taken their places. These men are generally selected on the basis of a university degree, teaching experience, and administrative experience—preferably in an education office. The quality of the men recruited has varied from county to county, being related to the value attached to divisional administration, the attitude of the county office regarding the role of the division education officer, and the salary paid. In some counties division education officers have been drawn from the lower ranks of county education staffs and later have accepted positions as assistant and deputy county education officers. Some English educators feel that the division education offices have not been attractive and that frequently they have not been filled by men of vigor and vision. The different views of the position and certain conditions sur-

rounding it have not given it the appeal which an important local administrative office should have.

Responsibilities of the division education officer are largely determined by the divisional executive. He is the chief administrative officer of the division and devotes his energies largely to work planned with and for the divisional executive. However, he may also serve as agent for the county education officer in some matters which have not been delegated, but which usually do not demand much of his time.

A typical statement of duties as they appear in a scheme follows:

> The functions of the Borough Education Officer shall include the following duties:
>
> a. To act as the chief executive officer and clerk of the divisional executive and generally to give it such advice as it may require;
>
> b. To carry out the instructions of the Divisional Executive on matters which lie within its delegated or referred responsibilities;
>
> c. Subject to the reasonable requirements of the Divisional Executive to carry out on behalf of the County Council such educational duties as may be reasonably required by the County Council in relation to any matters coming under their direct control;
>
> d. To prepare and submit such information and returns as the County Council may reasonably require;
>
> e. To summon and prepare agenda for the meetings of the Divisional Executive, its committees and sub-committees and send copies thereof as may be required to the Chief Education Officer at the same time as they are sent to members of the Divisional Executive;
>
> f. To prepare the minutes of the meetings of the Divisional Executive, its Committees and Sub-Committees and send copies thereof as may be required to the Chief Education Officer of the County Council;
>
> g. To act, where so appointed, as the clerk to the managers or governors of any maintained school in the divisional area.[37]

PROBLEMS OF THE DIVISION EDUCATION OFFICER

From the foregoing statement it can be seen that at times the division education officer finds himself in a rather difficult position. He certainly has to be a person of tact and ability to work with heads on the one hand and the county education staff on the other, and with the divisional executive as well. However, the problems do not seem too difficult except when a divisional executive and the county education committee are at cross purposes and seek opportunities to disagree. These situations arise occasionally. Then the division education officer finds it extremely difficult to do a satisfactory job; almost by definition, if he satisfies the divisional executive, he seems not to satisfy the county education committee. In fairness it should be noted, however, that counties which have fully accepted delegation expect the division education officer to be the best possible chief executive of the division.

[37] Borough of Lowestoft, *Scheme of Divisional Administration* (1945), p. 6.

Perhaps the most difficult of the education officer's problems in some counties arise as a result of his work with county officers other than those in the education department. The county may, for example, require the division to use the services of the county architect in its school-housing program, and the county architects may be extremely busy and therefore slow at doing the job. In these dealings, of course, the division education officer works officially through the county education office, but in practice, after the start of a program, these lines are frequently cut short with full approval of all parties. Similarly the county treasurer may be difficult and may exercise control by holding to a budget which is so detailed that the division has little or no discretion. In a number of counties these problems have been attacked and worked out to the satisfaction of all parties. There has been a general trend toward approving and administering in accord with broad budget categories and thus giving control of expenditures to the division.

Many of the problems with other departments of the county government are basically difficulties between education and the other services rather than the result of divisional administration. Since education has represented a larger and larger share of county government costs and since the counties have lost some areas of responsibility through creation of regional boards, other county departments have tended to move in on education and to want a larger hand in it. Thus though the education committee has in many counties been virtually independent of the county council after budget approval and has enjoyed large freedom of action, as has the county education officer, this is becoming decreasingly true. Changes in the relations of education offices to other county offices have been substantial in the last decade and are causing some education offices to hope for *ad hoc* status for education. Almost inevitably this conflict affects the operation of the divisional educational units.

Part of the difficulties of the division education officer have resulted from the fact that he has to deal with many of the lower ranking bureaucrats at the county education level. These bureaucrats send out instructions over the stamped signature of the Director of Education, although with little experience outside of county hall and with little understanding of varying conditions in the county, but cherishing uniformity. "In many matters they are in a position to control the actions of men better qualified than themselves, and to them procedures tend to become an end rather than a means. They have no objections to multiplying paper transactions, and they feel a need to exercise power."[38]

[38] Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

Certainly at these lower levels of bureaucracy there is evidence that in some local education authorities there is no understanding of the meaning of delegation. Whether wasteful and unintelligent though "safe" bureaucratic controls are worse in divisional administration than in other large organizations is extremely doubtful. Perhaps there are just more people who are aware of them and willing to assail them.

Some division education officers find it difficult to carry programs through because they lack opportunity to present their needs or those of their divisions directly to those who will have the final responsibility for approval. Thus they do not defend the budget proposal before the county council, although they and the chairman of the divisional executive discuss it with the county education officer and the county education committee or its officers. Likewise, and perhaps more important, they have little or no direct contact with the ministry or its officials.[39] For example, building plans developed in a division and approved at the county level are defended before the ministry by the county office. This tends to isolate and to frustrate the division education officer. The extent to which this is true is, of course, closely related to the attitude of the county office and the steps which it takes to avoid such a development.

These conditions, to be sure, do not necessarily block the alert division education officer. He seeks ways of meeting needs and often succeeds. In one instance, for example, the county had decided not to build additional community centers as a part of its educational program. The education officer believed in community centers and wanted very much to have one in connection with a school to be located in a large new housing project. Accordingly, he secured the funds for building the community center from the local housing authority and from a national trust. The county, through the education committee, was willing to operate and maintain the center as part of the educational program of the division. Thus, despite difficulties, some division education officers refuse to be bound by county policies which they cannot accept and thereby carry the education service forward. It is not as easy as going to the board of education of one's own community, especially if the community is wealthy and progressive. However, that arrangement, in England's experience, produced greater inequalities in education than she is now willing to accept.

[39] This is in accord with the wishes of the ministry. See Ministry of Education, *Local Administration of Education, Schemes of Divisional Administration,* Circular No. 5 (September 15, 1944), p. 17.

Extent of Delegation

Tables 4 to 6 present a comprehensive picture of the actual amount of delegation effected under the schemes. They pertain to the situation in nineteen counties with excepted districts and in twenty-nine counties with divisional executives. The figures state the number of counties with the specific practice rather than the number of divisions. They

TABLE 4

Delegation Regarding Appointment, Transfer, and Dismissal of Staff in 19 Counties with Excepted Districts and 29 Counties with Divisional Executives

Delegation[a] in personnel matters	Number of counties (19)[b] delegating to excepted districts	Number of counties (29)[b] delegating to divisiona executives
Appointment of head teachers of primary schools	16	12
Appointment of head teachers of secondary schools	13	10
Appointment of assistant teachers in primary schools	18	27
Appointment of assistant teachers in secondary schools	18	28
Appointment of nonteaching staff (caretakers, cleaners, school-meals workers)	19	26
Transfer of teaching staff	8	4
Dismissal of administrative staff with exception in some cases of Education Officer and other administrators receiving more than a specified salary	14	11
Dismissal of administrative staff retained *by County Council* but subject to recommendation of division	4	17
Dismissal of teaching staff	8	2
Dismissal of teaching staff retained *by County Council* but only upon recommendation of division	10	26
Dismissal of nonteaching staff	16	25

[a] Many of these responsibilities are discharged in a coöperative manner.Although a division has a power delegated to it, its education officer will probably discuss the matter with the education officer of the local education authority if it is an unusual matter, a matter of great importance, or a matter regarding which there has been no previous experience or generally accepted policy.

[b] Adapted from J. R. Sampson: *Delegation of Services Within Counties* (London, n.d.) pp. 51–65.

apply to many districts or divisions since some counties have ten or more of either or both of the two types of divisional units. Since the schemes vary from one division to another in some counties, it is also probable that a degree of error exists in the figures, although they are approximately correct.

Table 4 shows that generally the excepted districts have been delegated considerably more power regarding staff than have the divisional executives. This is especially true in appointment of heads. It is not

true for the nonteaching staff (caretakers, cleaners, school meals service) since responsibility for appointment and dismissal of this staff is generally delegated to the divisions, whatever their type. Appointment of assistant teachers is also largely delegated. For head teachers especially, the delegation has to take into account the role of the boards of

TABLE 5

DELEGATION REGARDING FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION IN 19 COUNTIES WITH EXCEPTED DISTRICTS AND IN 29 COUNTIES WITH DIVISIONAL EXECUTIVES

Delegation of financial administration[a]	Number of counties (19) delegating to excepted districts	Number of counties (29) delegating to divisional executives
Budget		
Preparation of budget estimates (in some instances on working papers prepared centrally)	17	17
Preparation of budget estimates but in conjunction with central departments	1	7
Supplementary estimates		
Supplementary estimates for all overspending budget	5	23
Supplementary estimates for overspending budget beyond specified limit	13	4
Financial administration		
Financial administration, such as payroll preparation, done centrally	1	25
Substantially all financial administration delegated	17	4
Payments to delegatees		
Payments (advances to delegatee) made on demand for current expenses	11	2
Payments to delegatees on account for current expenses	6	..
Payments of accounts		
Delegatee authorities examine, certify, and pay	18	2
Delegatee authorities examine and certify accounts and county authority makes payment	..	27

[a] Adapted from J. R. Sampson: *Delegation of Services Within Counties* (London, n.d.) pp. 51–65.

managers or governors of the respective schools. These appointments too are of great concern to the county. Although power to appoint is delegated, in many cases it is delegated with specifications of the manner in which the power shall be exercised. These specifications frequently require the establishment of a committee, with representatives of the managers, the county, and the divisional executive to conduct the screening. Or it may require the approval of a list by the county. On the other hand, where appointment of heads is not delegated, provision is

generally made for the divisional executive and the managers to do the initial screening or to serve on a committee which recommends prospective teachers to the county council. In one manner or another the managers, the divisional executive, and the county council thus generally share in the selection of heads. Although the procedure seems rather involved, it usually satisfies all participants. Only very infrequently is dissatisfaction expressed with the result. This probably is because the county and division education officers assist in setting up the desired qualifications for the position and in developing plans for the interviewing and for analysis of submitted credentials.

Although appointment of assistant teachers is generally delegated to the divisional executive, the county education authority usually retains responsibility for transfer of staff and for dismissal. In these matters again, however, it should be noted that there is little apparent conflict. County education authorities seldom dismiss any employee except upon recommendation of the division. And transfers are arranged through consultation and to the mutual satisfaction of the parties involved.

Table 5 contains data on delegation of responsibility for financial administration. Again the considerably larger powers of the excepted districts may be noted. Preparation of budget estimates is frequently delegated to the divisions. Funds are generally advanced to excepted districts to meet all costs for a specified period. The district then receives invoices, examines, certifies, and pays them. Divisional executives do not generally receive the money, but rather receive the invoices and examine and certify them, and the county authority then makes payment directly.

Most important in financial administration is the arrangement whereby a district or a divisional executive may incur expenditure within approved estimates without further approval. This is the usual situation; however, there has been considerable disagreement and contention about this. In earlier years the budget estimates in some counties were broken into many categories (sometimes more than one hundred), resulting in great rigidity. Furthermore, there were occasional disagreements about the classification of a given expenditure. These problems have now been largely overcome through coöperative effort. Budget categories have been reduced, in some cases not exceeding ten, and classifications of expenditure have been agreed to. A further source of irritation and conflict in some counties has been a provision that, in spite of approval of the budget, actual expenditures could not be incurred if they exceeded a certain figure (varying from £50 to £1,000) without specific approval by the county authority. This, of course, has

TABLE 6

EXTENT OF DELEGATION IN VARIOUS MATTERS IN 18 COUNTIES WITH EXCEPTED DISTRICTS AND IN 29 COUNTIES WITH DIVISIONAL EXECUTIVES

Delegation in various matters[a]	Number of counties (18) delegating to excepted districts	Number of counties (29) delegating to divisional executives
Insurance of educational properties	0	1
Management of technical and commercial colleges	6	3
Boarding schools	2	2
Management of residential special schools	1 (10.)[b]	1 (24)
University and further education awards	0	1
Management of special day schools	12 (13)	9 (19)
Use of school premises during out-of-school hours	18	25
Administration of Youth Service	14	7
Enforcement of school attendance	18	26
Routine medical inspection of children	18	21
Registration of school children	18	23
Administration, management, and control of evening institutes	14	11
Provision of milk and meals	18	27
Provision of transport	18	24
Repairs and maintenance of schools	18	27
Administration and management of community centers	9 (12)	4 (21)
Purchase of equipment and stores (other than those purchased by county)	18	25
Providing and administering school camps and holiday classes	14	7
Arrangements for admission and transfer of pupils (in a few cases not including grammar schools)	18	29
Dealing with pupils suspended for misconduct	18	25
Arrangements for school hours and holidays	18	23
Considering reports of inspections by central government, taking necessary action	18	22

[a] Adapted from J. R. Sampson: *Delegation of Services Within Counties* (London, n.d.) pp. 51–65.
[b] In services which are not offered in all 18 or 29 counties respectively, the number providing the service is shown in parenthesis.

resulted in delay and frustration for the divisional executive. It is a good example of the unwillingness of a county authority to delegate responsibility.

Table 6 shows the extent of delegation in a wide variety of matters. It reveals that insurance has almost universally remained a responsibility of the county authority, as the ministry recommended. Administration of boarding schools, technical schools, and residential special schools and the determination of university awards have also been

generally retained by the county. On the other hand, a large number of services such as admission, registration, attendance and transfer of children, repairs and maintenance of plant, provision of milk and meals, transportation, determination of school hours and holidays, purchase of equipment and supplies, and regulation of the use of school facilities during out-of-school hours are generally delegated. In administration of the Youth Service, the evening institutes, community centers, and school camps and holiday classes, there is greater diversity of practice, some counties delegating and others retaining direct responsibility. This diversity may reflect the varying sizes and competencies of divisional executives or the philosophy of the county regarding divisional administration.

Actual practice may vary from the written description. In all probability the variation in practice tends to be greater than these tables suggest, for much depends upon the people involved as well as upon the scheme. These tables relate to the schemes more than to the men.

It is also important to recognize that the meaning of the delegation reported is closely related to county regulations for various practices and services. In a few counties detailed regulations have been adopted for certain services which reduce the opportunity of the divisions to exercise discretion and which sharply curb initiative. In some instances these regulations do not permit divisional administrative units to meet needs effectively. In general, however, this is not true. During the decade under consideration the counties have increasingly turned to the divisions when drawing up regulations and have compiled them through coöperative effort.

Improvements in regulations have been among the most promising of the developments in divisional administration. In general, the tendency has been to state broad principles or guidelines for county adoption and to provide that the divisions shall work within this framework, with the understanding that they have discretionary power. In some counties the divisions are encouraged to submit programs and proposals for desired provisions beyond the general county educational program. Regrettably few divisions, however, seem to have done this. That may be the result of many factors, including the severe economic situation and the largely unmet, but clearly recognizable, educational needs resulting from the war, population expansion, and the gross inadequacy of previous years. Whatever the factors, action by the divisions will be important in indicating whether or not the local initiative of which England was justly proud in prewar years has survived, and in determining whether England has succeeded through the Education Act of

1944 in creating an integrated educational system and at the same time in truly stimulating local interest in education.

Divisional administration has thus brought with it many problems. The problem of confusing *agency* with *delegation* has been a major one. Another has been the relation of local education authorities and divisions to county clerks, the county treasurer, and county architects. In spite of the difficulties and the attitudes of some unenthusiastic (i.e., for delegation) county education authorities, county education officers, and divisional education officers, divisional administration has gone on. It has gone forward best, in fact very well, where the plan has been viewed as a procedure facilitating coöperative effort and development—where the involvement of more people in the planning and administration of an efficient service has been considered desirable. Its success may be greater than it would seem at first glance. The initial difficulties must be considered. Lack of previous experience with this type of organization and even more the lack of agreement regarding the principles in the light of which the plan should be evaluated have made its achievements uneven and difficult to assess. And the experimentation has been carried on during ten years which have been marked by social and economic change in England.

VI. AN EVALUATION OF DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATION

An examination of the working of divisional administration suggests that it has been neither a remarkable success nor a failure during the first decade of its existence. On the one hand, it is probably a good deal stronger today than it was even five years ago. In some counties and divisions it has worked remarkably well and has contributed significantly toward the achievement of the goals which its founders had in mind. It has its strong supporters who see it paving the way for essential decentralization in local administration, and who feel that although it was initially a compromise, it is considerably more than that today. They look forward to seeing its principles applied also to the large county boroughs or cities—though they would not deny that in some instances divisional administration may have a less important role to play if more adequate (not too large) local units of administration are established.

On the other hand, there are critics who feel that divisional administration was not even a very good compromise. They seek reorganization of local governmental units and the abolition of divisional administration. To them it has no intrinsic values and has succeeded (if it has)

only because of the men who operate it. To them it is impossible to separate decision-making from financial control, which the "county offices would never surrender." They only wonder how long this "experiment," this "compromise," will be permitted to continue.

The problem of finding or developing an integrated, efficient, well-organized, smoothly functioning administrative structure and a structure that will also stimulate and increase local participation and responsibility remains unsolved. Reconciliation of "democracy, in the sense of local participation," and "functional efficiency" will not be achieved readily. However, here we have one of the most important experiments in this field, and we need, therefore, to examine it carefully for clues, not to the answer, but to further study and experimentation.

Contributions of Divisional Administration

Divisional administration has facilitated the provision of a variety of arrangements for decentralization in different counties. Under the broad mandate of the Education Act of 1944 and in accord with the suggestions of the Ministry of Education, local authorities developed different plans for different divisional areas. This enabled them to take geographic and community organization factors and political and sociological traditions into account in creating the divisions and in establishing the divisional executives. This variety has proved of worth in that it has facilitated meeting local needs and securing local exercise of responsibility. It has been of value also in that through it a demonstration has been offered of the desirability of certain arrangements in preference to others. Gains from the variety therefore seem clearly to outweigh the losses. It could well be argued that greater gains would have occurred if the suggestions of the ministry as to what should or should not be delegated had been less rigid. There was too little variety in the written schemes in regard to delegated powers.

Divisional administration has facilitated the expression of opinions by local groups and individuals on educational matters and the development of their understanding of educational issues. Even the severest critics of the plan recognize this result. Some divisional executives have pushed the county education committees hard on certain matters of policy. Occasionally this has led to open controversy. In a few instances it has been related to the fact that the county education committee differed from the divisional executive in political complexion. Desirability of divisional administration may well be questioned when decisions are made on party lines. However, the desirability of having

more people interested in and participating in the development of a public educational policy seems clear. Divisional executives have received and have considered many questions which never would have been presented at the county level, regarding the type of secondary schools to be provided and the selection procedures followed by existing secondary schools. That this growing public awareness of its role in public education brings added burdens to some administrators is not to be questioned. It also causes some people to fear that an undesirable, pressure-group type of intervention in details of administration and curriculum may result. However, there is little or no evidence that this has been true. Critics of divisional administration hold that the benefits which result in terms of facilitating the expression of points of view and getting lay participation could be achieved as well through advisory committees. Others, however, hold that in the long run "advisory" committees which have no established powers will not attract well-qualified lay citizens as would a body with fixed and real responsibilities.

Divisional administration has demonstrated that significant responsibilities can be delegated even though broad general policies and financing arrangements are ultimately set at the county level. Some divisional executives, for example, have done excellent work in schoolhouse planning although the plans had to be approved ultimately by the county committee. Whether or not divisional executives have come to realize their responsibilities has depended upon the attitude of the county education committee and its officers. Where the county education committee believes in delegation and desires to strengthen it, results have been vastly superior to those achieved in counties where delegation is regarded as a nuisance. In counties which desire to delegate significant powers, the divisional executives have education officers with a different conception of their role. These divisional education officers participate in developing the policies which the county adopts. They figure the estimates for the division for the year and if these estimates are not fully approved, they understand why and have full opportunity to reshape them. They discharge their function within the approved estimates with decreasing control of detail and with decreasing reporting to and interference from the county education committee and other county departments and their officers. In situations in which divisional administration has been given a serious trial it has been demonstrated that decisions can be made through coöperation of the local education authority and the divisions within it.

Divisional administration has demonstrated that regulations must be

coöperatively developed by the county and the divisions of the county to insure the discharge of the county's obligation without reducing or limiting the divisions to matters of deadening, uniform routine and detail. This procedure also avoids much controversy. Wherever development of essential county-wide regulation has been undertaken coöperatively by committees representing the various interests and points of view, regulations have been drawn up which are satisfactory to all parties. The counties have succeeded in discharging their obligation to insure the attainment of standards, and the divisions have leeway to administer the educational service which gives them satisfaction.

Divisional administration has shown that the statute under which it is developed should be broad and general in its provisions. In some counties the feeling is strong that the statute and the resulting activity of the ministry have been too restraining. The schemes written for divisions with a population of 40,000 are remarkably like those for divisions with 200,000. Actually, the larger division could become a much more important division, with more delegated powers and with a larger and more competent staff. However, the statute has tended to produce for all divisions quite similar schemes which have changed too little in the light of experience. The door is open for change in the schemes, but no one is working at it either in the ministry or in the counties, except in a few cases where the size of the divisions or the desire to abolish them has been an issue. There seems to be little interest in formulating schemes more in line with needs and with the lessons of experience.

Divisional administration has demonstrated that both the scheme and those who work under it are of great importance. Despite the similarity of schemes, there is wide variation in practice. The results speak extremely well for the tact and coöperative effort of those engaged in a difficult administrative operation. In spite of the limitations of the schemes, the administrators have been carrying on many activities in a coöperative manner, with growing responsibilities wherein they have demonstrated competency. Striking illustrations are available of the variation and significance of administrative behavior, although based upon a similar, legal, formal structure.

Divisional administration has made it possible for many decisions to be made locally. These decisions would otherwise have had to be made at a central office much farther removed from the scene and probably with less participation by teachers and laymen. Decisions have been made pertaining to such matters as school attendance areas, the need for school housing and the site for it, the number and place of adult

evening centers, the adequacy of the school-meals service, the operation and maintenance of plant, attendance and transportation of children, purchase of supplies and equipment, and the employment of youth. Divisional administration has also made it possible for the people of the division to participate in the definition of the competencies desired in personnel, in the selection of the new headmaster or headmistress, and in the selection of teachers.

Divisional administration has facilitated the evaluation and coördination of education and other child and youth services. At the local level a comprehensive view of the local scene can be secured. This view is exceedingly difficult for individuals to evolve at the central office. Planning and coördination of the work of the secondary schools of different types in a division can be facilitated at the local level. And the work of the schools can be coördinated with housing developments, industry, library resources, recreational facilities, youth centers, and the programs of various agencies for adult education. Opportunity to facilitate such coördination and to take steps to provide needed services is one of the most important results of divisional administration. In itself it could make service in a divisional executive extremely interesting and worth while. It should be noted also that the county tends to be the sum of its divisions and that as demands arise in different areas, coördinated county action may well be secured.

Divisional administration has served as a training ground for administrators. It offers an opportunity for leadership in an area. It requires ability to work with a lay board and with the people of a division. From it may well come county and county borough education officers and their deputies and assistants. To it headmasters or county office supervisors may move to gain a broader experience than that afforded by the headship of a school or a supervisory position in a large office. It affords experience in every variety of administrative problem and also the opportunity to exercise discretion.

Divisional administration has improved the possibility of staff development. Direct access to an administrative officer is possible, and less dependence upon circulars and directives from the county office results. The more immediate personal contact makes it possible for the staff to participate in determining educational specifications for new school housing, in developing suggestions for the curriculum, and in considering the individual requests and needs of teachers. Recommendations beyond the established rules, for example, for leaves with pay because of unusual circumstances, can be offered by the divisional executive. Thus it is possible to show more personal human interest in

individual cases, whether involving staff or children, than is likely to exist in the extremely large organization.

Divisional administration has shown the need for delegation as something significantly different from mere agency. This is extremely important as an aspect of the theory of local government. In counties where delegation has meant agency, divisional administration has been of least worth. As Robson has said: "If delegation is to be no more than mere agency, it will contain neither the substance nor the spirit of our system of local government."[40] Or again in Cohen's words: "If differences in local circumstances are to affect the way in which measures are carried out, it is essential that delegation should include the power to make decisions within the defined limits, and to act upon decisions taken. If delegation is hedged in with too many provisos, and if the scope for making decisions is too limited, the subordinate body becomes an agent which can do nothing without the prior consent of the county council, or, in the jargon of the day, it can act only as a 'rubber stamp.' Such a body is not a responsible one; for responsibility involves the exercise of discretion."[41] Garner has stated: "If the delegatee is forever to be liable, to be restricted in the exercise of its delegated discretionary powers by instructions the purport of which it had no previous means of knowing, it will, it is submitted, be incapable of exercising such discretion with any freedom; the delegatee may even be obliged, before exercising the purported discretion, to obtain the instructions of its principal, thereby destroying the whole purpose of the delegation."[42] Thus the opinion has been evolving and has been approved by the courts that a body which has power to delegate may do so, and that subject to statutory limitations or reservations in the instrument of delegation, "once the discretion has been delegated, the principal is denuded of all authority and he cannot subsequently dictate to his delegatee as to the method of exercise of the power."[43] Discretion has been transferred, as well as mere executory power which might be discharged by an agent.

Divisional administration has increased the participation of the people in decision-making in educational matters and has encouraged them to contribute to the solution of the educational problems of the area. In this way it has served as an important phase of adult education while improving the educational service. It has thus avoided some of the worst dangers of the large organization, such as decision-making by those far removed from the situation and unfamiliar with it; the

[40] William A. Robson, "Foreword," in Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. ix.
[41] Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[42] J. F. Garner, "The Delegation of Administrative Discretion," *Public Administration*, Vol. XXVII (Summer, 1949), p. 119.
[43] Blackpool Corporation vs. Locker, 1948 (1 All ER 85).

belief of the people that the bureaucracy is so unresponsive that the attempt to do anything about troublesome issues will be unavailing; the increasing lack of ability on the part of people affected by a matter to take action regarding it; the tendency for all people, including teachers and children, to become statistics, forgetting human personality; and the tendency of the many departments of the large organization to lose contact with one another and thus to be highly ineffective in dealing with a local problem which is comprehensive in nature.

The Case Against Divisional Administration

If profit is to be gained from the experience with divisional administration, it is equally important to examine it in some detail as it is seen by its critics. Its failures and inadequacies may be important keys to the improvement of plans of delegation and divisional administration as well as to defects in the idea itself. Again it must be noted that divisional administration has succeeded (or failed) in widely varying degrees and manners in different counties. Thus it can have enjoyed both a large measure of success and a large measure of failure. The following inadequacies and failures of divisional administration as it has been practiced in education in England are presented by those who are opposed to it.

Divisional administration introduces another tier of government. Single-tier local government fixes responsibility and avoids confusion. Efficient administration can be best achieved with single-tier government. Divisional administration spreads the interest of the people in local government when it may be sufficiently difficult to get them interested in a single tier. When there is more than one tier there will inevitably be different interpretations as to the nature and extent of powers delegated. There will also be need for endless conferences and reaching of agreements. Of these claims there can be little doubt. As one administrator sees it, one-tier local government is far more tidy. But proponents of divisional administration ask whether we are seeking that which is administratively convenient, or "rather at drawing a line between powers which require unified administration over large areas and powers which can be better administered on a smaller scale, in close contact with the individuals and households affected by their use"; and similarly, whether we "seek to differentiate between planning and executive action—because many things that call for coordinated planning over large areas can best be carried into effect under the auspices of relatively small scale authorities."[44]

[44] G. D. H. Cole, *Local and Regional Government* (London, 1947), p. xi.

Divisional administration has resulted in long delays and in much waste of time. Committees of the divisional executive meet and take action. They then report to the divisional executive. It decides to make recommendations to the county education committee. But the county education committee does not meet for a month. Certainly in many counties in the first year of divisional administration there was considerable delay—one governmental body waiting for another to act, recommendations going back and forth. This continues to be true in some counties. Closely related to this matter is the question of whether or not delegation has really been effected. It should also be noted that in some of the larger authorities delay might well be as great with single-tier government because of the size of the authority, the distance from the scene, and the failure to understand the need for quick action or the inability to take it because of other commitments. Another element in delay has been the tendency to use budget estimates with far too many categories as control instruments. This has opened the way for bureaucrats of the lower (clerical) levels to enter the scene and to hold up action, for to them the existing forms and paper work have at times been more important than getting the job done.

Divisional administration has increased the costs of administration. This view has been advanced by some of its opponents and at times by the ministry. Actually, there is little factual evidence to support the view that it has added materially to costs. Smith,[45] in a study of county boroughs without divisional administration and counties with it, found administrative costs to be very similar. Unfortunately in this study and in other evidence available there has been no attempt to determine the cost of each service separately. Visits to the offices of the education officers of the divisions do not suggest that they have been overstaffed or that they operate in an extravagant manner. Supporters of divisional administration are not upset by the thought that it may cost somewhat more. They believe that if, as a result, the people have a valuable experience in government and other gains are made, it is worth many times more than any cost differential that may exist.

Divisional administration has failed (at least in relation to its potential) because it has not given sufficient responsibility to the divisions to attract competent men either to service on the executive or as the education officer of the division. This is especially true in divisions which are rather small—too small, for example, to coördinate opportunities for secondary education or to accept responsibility for any

[45] John L. Smith, "Cost of Divisional Administration in England," *Public Administration*, Vol. XXIX (Autumn, 1951), pp. 231–236; also National Association of Divisional Executives for Education, "Appendix," *Minutes* (January, 1951).

important phases of further education. It is true also in counties where there has been little or no disposition to develop divisions with large powers. Those who see the divisional executive as a fifth wheel have probably not succeeded in making it a responsible body. Many who are rather neutral on the question of divisional administration say if it is to be tried seriously, it is essential that adequately sized units be created and that genuine responsibility be conferred upon them. Otherwise as Self has stated: "too much depends upon the good graces of the parent authority."[46] Possibly the division should also have some financial resources of its own since without them effective delegation is "inevitably hard to achieve."

Divisional administration is much too difficult to operate, much too dependent upon the men at each end of the line, and worth too little as a system. Its success is said to be too dependent upon the men who operate it. The right men can make a success of any administrative arrangement, or at least get along with it; but should they be asked to do so? And is it desirable to continue a system which is so completely dependent on coöperative, tactful men? It is one thing to list services to be delegated. The manner in which they are interpreted and the concepts of delegation, however, are quite something else. When mistakes are made by a division, as they must be occasionally, will not the delegator inevitably step in and reduce the division's powers? Divisional administration is almost inevitably irksome to the larger authority and to its officers and therefore cannot result in smooth, efficient, or satisfying administration. Divisional administration is also likely to be bothersome to the education officer of the division, since he has limited powers and constantly seeks more responsibility. Resulting frictions reduce effectiveness greatly.

Divisional administration reduces the powers of the boards of managers or governors and is a source of dissatisfaction to the heads of schools, since they prefer to deal directly with the county education officer. Thus, instead of providing for effective local action through the boards, it interferes with them and reduces the opportunity for effective lay participation. No definite layer of responsibilities is believed to exist between those which the managers or governors exercise and those which are properly discharged at the county level. Heads of schools claim that they can get more satisfaction regarding their problems by going directly to the county education officer. They prefer to deal with someone who has authority to make decisions. Too often the education

[46] P. J. O. Self, "The Reconstuction of Local Government," Report of the Eighth Annual Conference, National Association of Divisional Executives for Education (1954), p. 38.

officer of the division can only refer a problem to the county education officer or discuss it with him less satisfactorily than the head formerly could. Heads would like to have the funds that maintain the divisions and their staffs to use for their schools and for other matters pertaining directly to the educational process. The divisions and their officers are just another evidence of the sprawling administrative bureaucracy which they fear is growing much too rapidly. Those favoring divisional administration insist that it need not interfere with the managers and governors, who are only advisory in any case, but can strengthen their position. They hold also that it is far better for some members of the administrative staff to be in the field and responsible to lay boards than for them to be a part of a large central office organization.

Divisional administration is unsound since it places the education officer in an intolerable position. He is elected by a method in which two authorities, the county and the division, are involved. His salary is fixed and paid by the county education committee, but he is responsible to the divisional executive and devotes most of his time to serving as the chief executive of the division. In any controversy between the county education committee and the divisional executive, he is in the middle. The county education committee expects him to do its bidding, for he is an officer of the committee and is paid by it. The divisional executive expects him to fight its battles, for he is the chief executive officer of the divisional executive. Neither body is quite satisfied with the role he plays; each tends to distrust him as its agent. To these troubles must be added the fact that he generally does not have direct access to the ministry and its officials. Thus if he remains within the official channels of communication he must seek the advice of the county education officer even though his divisional executive may expect him to pursue a course contrary to that desired by the county education officer. In consequence, he is a lonely professional figure. The difficulties may cause him to settle back and merely keep the machine running at a minimum rate or they may cause him to become argumentative and desirous of exploiting every opportunity for controversy.

These conditions and the lack of full responsibility for a school system cause some schoolmen to regard the position of the divisional education officer as a dead end with few and unpromising opportunities for advancement. Some educators also claim that these conditions lead men of less than outstanding promise to enter the position, and that many of the divisional education officers are less competent than were the education officers of the former Part III authorities. In other counties, however, this idea is rejected vehemently, and evidence is

cited to show that the divisional education officers have had more education and have more ability as leaders than did the Part III administrators. Thus, though it is agreed that the position of the divisional education officer is difficult, there is wide disagreement regarding the impact of this difficulty on the officer. There are those who see it as an opportunity through which educational leaders can be prepared.

Divisional administration is claimed to have "leveled down." Some of the old Part III authorities were among the leaders in the nation in introducing important innovations in education. The divisional executives which have replaced them are not developing new programs. Some Part III authorities paid extremely high salaries to attract creative administrators and developed exceedingly competent administrative staffs. Salaries of the education officers of the divisions have been held down, although they were reasonably adjusted in 1955. Education in some of the Part III authorities was far in advance of education in other parts of the county. Today the differences in quality of education are much narrower, since education in all parts of the county is financed by the county, and an attempt has been made to equalize opportunities, especially by improving the service in the poorer areas. It should be noted that much of this change was not necessarily the result of divisional administration. As a result of the war and the educational inadequacies and inequalities which were revealed during it, there was wide agreement in England that the least adequate areas should be strengthened. This was one of the main reasons for increasing the power of the minister in the Education Act of 1944. There was agreement, for example, that merely because one authority had more money, it should not be in a position to "raid" other authorities and gather together a large percentage of the best teachers. This was held to be contrary to the national interest.

Another factor in the situation has been the scarcity of materials and men in England since the war years. With only a limited amount of schoolhouse construction permitted because of a shortage of building materials, it is understandable that little of it took place in those areas which had the best developed plants. Thus though there has been no desire on the part of anyone to level down, it seems practically certain that those areas which were bombed out, or were new housing areas without schools, or were formerly quite inadequate in provisions have generally advanced much more than those which enjoyed better-than-average facilities. England continues to emphasize the importance of variety, and in the years since the war there has been much of it in the modern secondary school. She has in many regards, however, become

far more centralized than formerly and hence less inclined to provide many of the conditions which encourage diversity. She may be less inclined now to believe that improvement is achieved by having some authorities far in advance of others. She is more inclined to think that advances can be accomplished through leadership of the ministry itself. A good case in point is the School Development Program[47] which is essentially an experimental pioneering unit of the ministry devoted to the study of problems in the school-housing field. In light of these various developments, it is too soon to determine if vigorous local initiative will be maintained.

Divisional administration is ineffective because the divisional executives in the majority of cases are indirectly elected ad hoc *bodies.* As *ad hoc* bodies, they are believed to have less power than if popularly elected and if responsible for a broader range of services. They suffer from being *ad hoc* bodies in a society where such bodies usually are not highly regarded. Furthermore, they often do not have tradition behind them in the sense in which borough councils do. In many cases they do not represent only one small community which, through the years, has had its local government council and pride in itself as a community. Frequently a divisional executive represents a number of such units and possibly fringe rural territory also. It would therefore need to operate for some years before it could hope to develop a community spirit. Without popular election and the authority to establish taxes, the divisional executives are removed from the public eye in the two matters most likely to attract public interest. Despite these difficulties, it is claimed that in a number of the divisions there is a marked increase in ability to look at educational problems for the division as a unit.

Divisional administration makes reorganization of local governmental units unnecessary in cases where it would otherwise occur. Thus large boroughs which desire county borough status and complete independence from the counties feel hampered in their attempt to gain such status, since they already enjoy some independence through divisional administration. They may feel that if divisional administration did not exist the very size of some of the authorities, geographically if not in population, would result in problems which would force reorganization. They favor one-tier local government and view divisional administration as a block to it.

[47] Theodore L. Reller, "Improved Schoolhousing and Lower Costs—The Work of the Development Group," *The American School Board Journal,* Vol. 130, No. 3 (March, 1955), pp. 49–50.

In conclusion, it should be noted that much of the criticism of divisional administration is directed toward the plan as it has operated rather than toward the theory involved. Much of the favorable comment is based upon what are held to be its theoretical potentialities rather than its concrete results in practice. Those who favor it attach great importance to keeping the educational service close to the people. They hold that though administrative efficiency is important, the demand for larger and more efficient organization in certain areas of service makes it increasingly imperative that great effort be made to interest ordinary citizens in services which are personal and intimate. They believe that this need not reduce administrative efficiency unreasonably—that in fact in the long run it may increase it. They fear that ordinary citizens cannot be interested "if hugeness is allowed to prevail over neighborhood."[48] They see the administration of education as important in itself but also important as an opportunity for further education in the processes of self-government. Those who oppose divisional administration and wish to see it eliminated are more concerned with achieving a highly efficient service. They value the role of the expert in the service and wish that he might be less fettered by lay committees and boards with "little knowledge." The idea of utilizing a service to provide further experiences in the practice of citizenship has little appeal to them. Some of them could readily accept regional administration of the educational service, freeing it from many of the traditional local controls. Thus the opponents in the struggle push the scales one way or the other as they seek to reconcile administrative efficiency and the desire for democracy—meaning citizen participation and decision-making at the local level.

VII. FEWER AND MORE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

To conclude this study of large educational organizations and of one attempt to decentralize within them, a series of assumptions and guiding principles are offered. Fundamentally these assumptions and guiding principles support the apparently contradictory view that there is need for "fewer and more school districts." Examination will reveal that this is not a contradiction, however, but is the direction in which movement might profitably occur, especially in our large conurbations.

Before presenting this view it is desirable to recall that the basic problem attacked in this study was the question of whether or not large-scale organizations which were the result of various forces could

[48] Cole, *op. cit.*, p. xiv.

be decentralized in such manner that many of the problems resulting from the large size could be reduced or overcome. It was intended that evidence should be gained largely from the experience which England has had in a decade of divisional administration. Evidence from this attempt at decentralization does not offer a conclusive answer. However, it is believed that the experience has provided a base upon which the following assumptions, principles, and framework of statutes and schemes may properly be advanced. Much additional work in the area of decentralization of large organizations will be needed before any fixed guidelines may be established.

Assumptions Involved in the Proposal

1. *The demand for larger units for various local governmental purposes and for education is understandable, and the trend toward such units will continue.* Large units are necessary if specialized vocational education, junior college, and adult educational opportunities are to be provided efficiently. Large units are essential if programs of in-service education of teachers are to be developed. Many aids, audio-visual ones for example, can be provided only by large units or by coöperation of small ones. Radio and television, if they are to be used effectively, require large units. Provisions for those with very special abilities or disabilities can be made economically only by large units. Essential research and planning in education will probably not be carried out at the local level except through large organizations. Even the larger units in some of our states have little capacity for some of these undertakings. The existence around our cities of many school districts which are geographically and economically a part of the city but politically (i.e., by statute) not a part of the city cannot be justified. They preserve wide inequalities in ability to support public education. Frequently they do not provide many essential services and cannot afford to do so. No body exists which has the authority to plan for the area. It would therefore seem that in the years ahead, even in our metropolitan areas, there will be fewer school districts.

2. *Although the various districts could plan coöperatively, provide for special education needs, and carry on research, they are not likely to do so on the necessary scale.* They probably would not equalize educational opportunities in the area. That must be done by state action. To the degree to which an exceedingly large number of districts is retained, the state has to increase its controls, and opportunity for local initiative tends to be correspondingly reduced. Since coöperation does not seem to be a method through which the essential planning, the spe-

cial provisions and services, and the equalization of ability to support education will be provided, larger and hence fewer districts seem necessary.

3. *The pull toward larger units noted here is just one aspect of the powerful drive for increased centralization and administrative efficiency which characterizes our society and other societies today.* The same drive can be seen in industry and in agriculture. It is shown also by the greatly increased role of the state in the financing and direction of public education in recent decades. Whether the forces demanding centralization and efficiency are as great in public education as in industry may be questioned. However, it cannot be doubted that they are widespread. The striking change in the last four decades in the relation of the federal government to local and state governments is indicative of the same trend. It would therefore seem practically certain that power is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the few—those who have control of the ever-larger organizations, whether in industry, agriculture, labor, or public services.

4. *The more centralization emerges as the central pattern of our society, the more important it becomes that in selected areas opportunity and encouragement for individual or local participation be provided.* Participation may be most essential and most frequent in policy determination. But the knowledge and understanding necessary for policy determination develop only through experience. This experience, if it is to be more than voting on issues and men, will have to be gained largely at the local level. Opportunities at the center of vast organizations for lay participation are difficult to provide. Local participation should be encouraged where administrative efficiency would be least affected, particularly in fields in which the lives of the people and the values which they hold are of central importance.

5. *Since an area or district large enough to satisfy needs indicated in paragraph 1 is too large to meet other educational needs, decentralization must be sought.* In this manner the advantages of the large unit can be secured where they are essential, and the values to be gained through lay participation need not be lost. A unit large enough to provide research service would remove kindergartens, primary schools, and even community centers far from the people who should be playing an important role in directing them. The search for the single area which meets all educational needs can thus be dispensed with; it is not to be found. The answer, however, is not to provide overlapping independent authorities which have no relation to one another, but rather to establish large units and then develop decentralization within them.

6. *A division (within a district) which is closely connected with a community can coördinate more effectively the various educational activities with related home and social welfare activities than can the officers or staff or a large unit far removed from the scene of action.* Thus much of the return of questions to the center for coördination or decision-making can be avoided, and more effective solutions can be found more quickly at the local level. In this way the people on the scene can be encouraged to take action and can more readily observe the results of their work. Both laymen and administrators of educational and other agencies are stimulated by the opportunity to act.

7. *Within the large district, divisions can be created which are responsible and which have a life of their own.* They may, within broad limits, have responsibility for certain phases of education, such as the elementary and secondary schools. They may have responsibility for administration, for example, though responsibility for planning may remain in the hands of the large authority. The large authority would also retain responsibility for the education of certain groups although divisions would assist in this, at least to the point of identifying children in need of special service and of reintegrating them into the regular stream. The desired relation of the large district to the division could possibly be achieved through confederation, that is, through actions by the existing districts. It is far more likely to be achieved, however, since the districts are creations of the state, through statutes which insure units of adequate size for purposes demanding a large unit and at the same time provide for and make mandatory the application of a decentralization procedure. Thus the basic legal structure for fewer and more units would be provided at one stroke.

Necessary Provisions of Statute and Schemes in the Implementation of the Proposal

1. Essential decentralization should be worked out locally in the affected district, in accord with general principles contained in the legislation. Legislation should not attempt to define the boundaries of the divisions. However, it should insure that a genuine attempt is made to create effective divisions and to make them responsible bodies.

2. *Delegation* as distinguished from *agency* should be the objective. This involves providing the delegatee (the division) with freedom to exercise discretion and to act without referral back to the parent body or delegator (the district) for approval.

3. Services delegated should be worked out locally, but they should generally include elementary and secondary education and community-

related youth and adult educational activities. Administration of staff, student personnel, curriculum, building operation and maintenance, and supply and equipment management should be delegated. For some of these services, minimum common procedures might well be coöperatively developed and generally employed. Furthermore, routine operations such as paying salaries might be carried on centrally because of the economy involved. This need not, however, interfere with the delegated control. The division should have responsibility for budget development and administration. It should also have the right to determine if an additional limited tax shall be levied upon its area, above the district-wide tax.

4. Each local district shoud be required to formulate a scheme or schemes within a defined period, setting forth the divisions and the delegated responsibilities. The scheme could be in substantial part common to the district, or it could be adjusted to the needs of the divisions.

5. Schemes should be reviewed at the end of three years and redrafted coöperatively by the local district and its divisions. Thereafter such review should occur at the end of each six- to eight-year period. The review should consider size and number of divisions as well as the powers delegated to them.

6. The state board of education, on recommendation of the state superintendent of schools, should name an especially competent individual or preferably a small committee to act as arbitrator to evaluate and recommend for approval the schemes and any revisions in accord with the principles set forth in the law. Final approval of schemes and revisions should be a responsibility of the state board of education.

7. Divisions should be large enough to accept responsibility for important services. Experience in England would suggest that in general they should have a population of at least 60,000. In the large conurbations they should have a minimum population of approximately 100,000. Other factors, such as historical influences, community structure, community feeling, geography, transportation systems, and the organization of related services, should be considered in setting up the divisions.

8. Each division should have a popularly elected board of education and a superintendent of schools selected by the board and responsible to it. The local district should coöperate with the division in defining the competencies desired in the superintendent of the division and should have the right to approve a list of candidates from which the selection would be made.

9. The local district under the state framework should be responsible

for the maintenance of minimum standards for all divisions; for over-all planning; for stated phases of special education; for research; for levying of taxes, both those common to the whole district and those limited to particular divisions; for issuance of bonds; for approval of the budget; for coördination of procedures in selection, in-service development, and promotion of professional personnel; for auditing financial records of all divisions; and for other matters as provided in the plan. Also, the district should maintain a staff of experts to aid the divisions in general and special curricular areas, in evaluation of student growth, in schoolhouse planning, and in other areas. It should be responsible for junior college work and technical education. In general, the district board should fill the role that the legislature does today—setting broad policies, insuring adequate basic financing, and stimulating the divisions to develop programs in accord with needs.

10. Following approval of the budget, the divisions should be free to carry forward their programs without interference from the local district. In emergencies, divisions should be required to submit additional budget requests to the district.

11. The schemes should recognize and provide that though the district and the division each will have clearly defined responsibilities, some of these responsibilities will be best discharged through high-level coöperative action. Procedures should be suggested in the scheme for securing coöperative action in selection and training of staff, development of experimental programs, planning of plant, and utilization of specialists.

12. Arrangements should be made in the plan for the exchange of minutes and other documents between the district and the divisions and among the divisions. Arrangements should also be made for regular conferences of the boards of education with the superintendents of schools and other staff members in order that understanding be developed and initiative stimulated.

Some Questions Concerning the Proposal

Among the many questions which may well be raised regarding this proposal, the following are believed to be among the most important ones:

1. Would it be better to have more detail specified in statute and less in the schemes?

2. Can a line be successfully drawn between those responsibilities which should be discharged directly by the district and those delegated to the divisions?

3. Will districts decentralize? Is the pull toward centralization and the feeling of security gained through central control too great?

4. Will the plan add to educational costs?

5. Can divisional tax power be justified? Will it result in too great inequalities of educational opportunity?

These questions, of course, involve judgment and cannot be categorically answered.

It is believed that dependence upon a scheme is to be preferred to dependence on statute, primarily because through it greater flexibility can be attained. Flexibility is necessary; the development is experimental; and no one size of division or amount or type of delegation is best for the various situations which exist. Furthermore, the development and periodic review of the schemes should in itself be an educational experience of great importance for the successful working of the plan. And the success of the plan will be closely related to the extent to which its basic philosophy is accepted, and accepted with some enthusiasm, by the laymen and professional educators concerned.

A sharp fixed line cannot be drawn between responsibilities which should be delegated and those which should not be. It is for this reason that the schemes might well be valued for their diversity rather than for the extent to which they form a pattern. Some divisions will have more vitality and more initial competence and can be granted broader powers than others. The proper drawing of the line can be determined only through much more experience than we have had. Again it should be noted that the success of the plan is related to definite fixing of responsibilities, but it is at least equally related to the ability to attack problems coöperatively. What is sought is a framework within which men can coöperate effectively in meeting educational problems.

Whether or not districts decentralize depends upon the extent to which they see the advantages of doing so. The legislature can provide the opportunity, but if the work is to be well done, it will need to be done by men who value it and not by men living only in accord with the letter of the statute. Have the problems of large organizations been recognized? How much do we really want and value action by laymen in educational affairs? Are we seeking only administrative efficiency? Or are we also seeking opportunities for men to practice democracy in the sense of making decisions at the local level about matters which greatly concern them?

The plan *may* lead to a slight increase in educational costs. If it succeeds, it will be because both citizens and professional educators are interested in school improvement. This may mean higher costs for better service. For equivalent service there is no reason to believe that costs will increase. But for each tax dollar invested, the new plan should insure larger returns than the old.

A measure of divisional tax leeway seems important if the divisions are to have a full sense of responsibility. Some may oppose it believing that it will further inequalities of educational opportunity and even lead wealthier divisions to wish to keep the over-all tax low. However, in America, tax leeway enjoyed by wealthy districts of the states has not usually caused them to attempt to keep state aid low. Rather, their programs have stimulated the rise in state assumption of financial responsibilities. Divisional tax leeway may therefore be a way to increase the efforts of districts rather than the reverse. At any rate, the tax leeway issue should be met by the schemes, and if undesirable in its effects it could be modified or limited. It should be noted that the district would provide an over-all tax which, when combined with state aid, would result in sufficient funds for each division to maintain a high-level minimum program. The divisions would thus have a better base on which to build than the districts ordinarily do, and tax leeway would therefore be more genuine than it now is for many districts. Furthermore, as large divisions, they would be much more equal in ability to make additional effort than would the present districts of many states.

Conclusion

The program suggested here, developed in light of the experience of England with divisional administration, is not basically different from that envisaged in the Bronx Park Community Project.[49] In the Bronx Park Community Project, it was not proposed to go quite as far toward making the divisions "independent." That may well have been because a program of gradual decentralization was anticipated—one built rather definitely upon the existing structure in New York City. In that case the states were looked to for the basic experience in light of which the plan might be developed in its fuller details. Statutes were not recommended requiring schemes to be drawn up, as is proposed here.

It is also interesting to note that Toronto has adopted a plan somewhat similar to the one proposed. This plan was adopted in 1953 following several studies of planning and of centralization and decentralization of various aspects of local government in the greater Toronto area. It provides a Metropolitan School Board and eleven Area Boards of Education.[50] The plan involves a federal system of municipal gov-

[49] "The Road Ahead: A Decentralized School System," in Strayer and Yavner, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 993–1000.

[50] Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, *Metropolitan Toronto* (Toronto, 1955), p. 9; *The Statutes of Ontario, 1953,* chap. 73.

ernment. Area boards retain their autonomy in educational affairs. The metropolitan board receives revenues from the tax levy in the total metropolitan area and all legislative grants from the provincial government. It develops a composite budget, coördinates school planning in the area, coördinates school development with subdivision development, and makes payments to or on behalf of the area boards.

By such a program as is proposed here, it is conceivable that we may effectively attack the fringe problem of many cities,[51] as well as the problem of enriching and enlivening education within the cities. Perhaps in such areas *fewer* school districts could be achieved in the knowledge that there would be *more* school districts (divisions). In this way the advantages of centralizing that which is truly a unit—the city and its adjoining areas—could be gained, at the same time improving the quantity and quality of local participation, action, learning, and initiative. Thus schools could be related more closely to the lives of ordinary men and women and planning and financing would be accomplished through a unit related to the economic and social situation of the day. The citizen is, after all, both a citizen of the metropolitan area and a citizen of his more immediate community. Through this organization he could function effectively in both capacities.

Successful application of the program in metropolitan areas might well lead to the utilization of the same principles in other areas or regions of our states. The program could reduce the need for direct state action, reunite towns and rural areas which are interdependent, eliminate the need for overlapping districts to serve different purposes, and yet provide necessary units for planning and other services requiring a large unit. Such a development would also involve a thorough reëxamination of the role of the intermediate unit. On the one hand, local initiative could be greatly strengthened; on the other, the state could be assured that the standards were being raised. "Efficiency" (in the sense of utilizing the services of the expert and the large unit with abundant resources to provide a markedly better educational program) and "democracy" (in the sense of facilitating the development of intelligent decision-making by the people) could be achieved simultaneously.

[51] See, for example, Illinois Legislative Council, *Structure of Governments in Metropolitan Areas,* Publication 113, 1952; State of California, *Preliminary Report of the Assembly Interim Committee on Municipal and County Government—Covering Fringe Area Problems in the County of Los Angeles,* 1953.

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